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SUMARAH: A STUDY OF THE ART OF LIVING

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SUMARAH:
A STUDY OF THE ART OF LIVING

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the faculty of The
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department
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DAVID GORDON HOWE. Sumarah: A Study of the Art of Living (Under the direction of Dr. ROBERT E. DANIELS.)

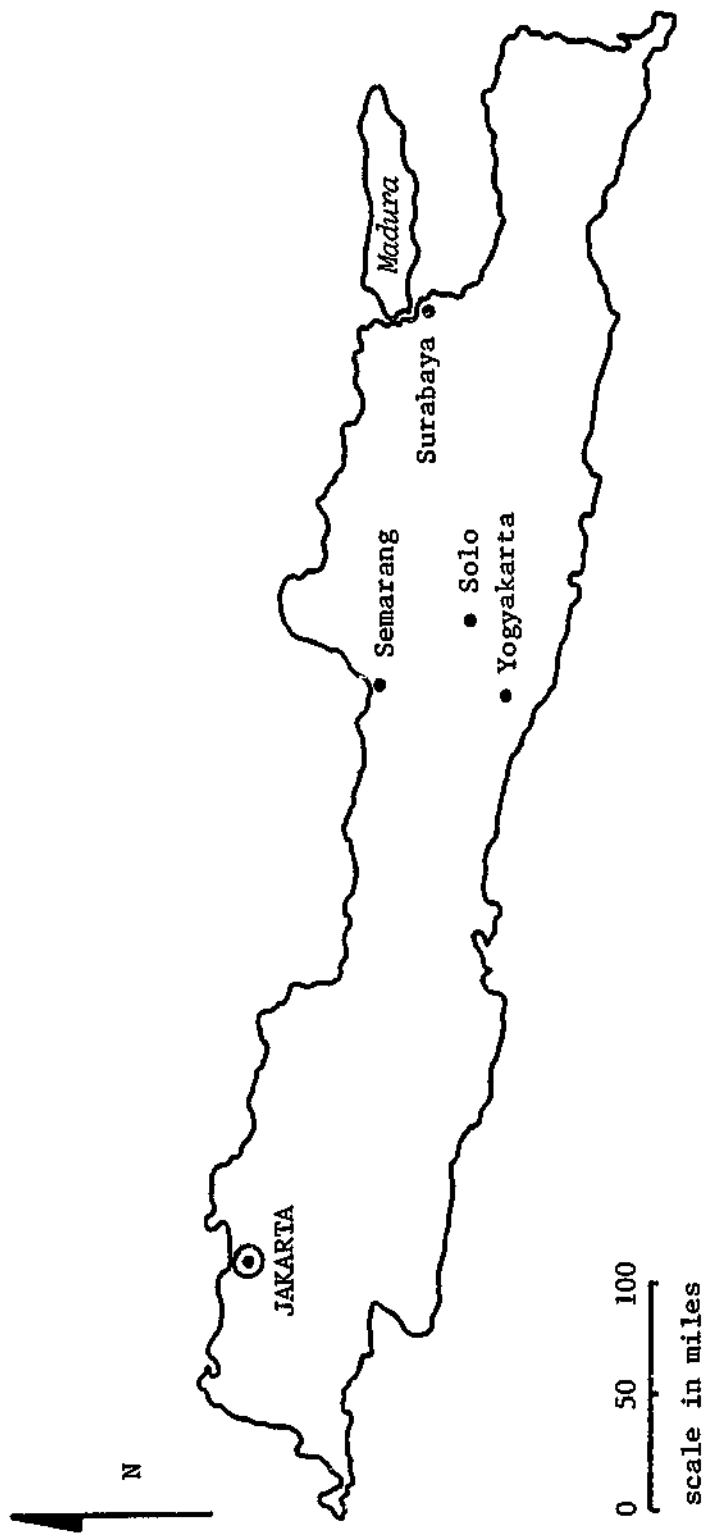
I did my research in the city of Solo in Central Java. For two years, I investigated a group which practices a form of mysticism or mystic psychology. Mystic disciplines are common knowledge in Central Java. The traditional forms emphasize fasts and abstinences. However, there are about 350 modern, nationally registered groups which have grown out of and departed somewhat from this tradition. Whereas the traditional disciplines were practiced in small, teacher/student relationships, some of the modern groups have more than 100,000 members nationally. The group I studied was Sumarah, which has about 10,000 members.

It is difficult to communicate the centrality of these practices in Javanese world-view to a Western audience because there are no cultural parallels. The term "mysticism" itself does not communicate "discipline" in English so much as something indistinct and metaphysical. In Java, mysticism is primarily a practice. This practice is training for receiving reality accurately. I studied Sumarah by practicing it. During the last six months I was in Solo, I led a weekly meeting, and this informs the description. However, the primary source of illustrations for this report is forty-five hours of tapes made of the meetings.

This research raises many issues. However, the most general challenge it makes to anthropology is to our methods and epistemology. In effect, their perspective shows that the Western sciences have observed humanity while looking through the wrong end of the

telescope. My meaning here is almost literal. The Javanese hold that the body is an instrument which receives information about itself and the world. It is a very complex and subtle receptor. They hold that there are various levels of understanding which reflect varying degrees of sensitivity. They believe that the less perceptual breadth, the less of the world that is referenced in an observation. Thus, conversely, the greater the sensitivity of a response, the more that an observation based on it will be true, reflective of that which is observed, and the more reliable it will be. Of the levels of understanding, the least receptive and narrowest is thought. We never get farther away from the world or one another than when we relate based on our thoughts.

The human sciences espouse objectivity, but this objectivity is attained by limiting input, by training the academic to relate from the experientially isolated realm of thought. It is rigid objectivity, a posture attained and maintained by controlling what is received, rather than being based in the open receptivity which the Javanese call "neutrality." The Javanese recognize that the ego can repress the emotions and enforce calm, but this is very different from neutrality which arises from the breadth of perspective on attaining non-judgmental receptivity. They believe that this is a universal human capacity, in which we all start out as infants, but that one must train before one can actualize it in maturity. This training is the subject of this dissertation. In it, I describe how this training practice is carried out in Sumarah. The description is organized so as to examine and explain a text which is a translation of a three-hour meeting.



JAVA

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PREFACE

This report is designed to explain a text. The text is a translation of a Sumarah meeting. Sumarah is a group which practices a form of Javanese mystic psychology. It is hoped that the reader who masters the material presented will be able to understand most of what went on in the meeting. The presentation is divided into parts, which are sub-divided into chapters.

Part I is the introduction, which includes an account of the fieldwork and my experience in it, and a statement of the orientation of this report relative to some related literature.

Part II describes Java, and contrasts a Western perspective with the Javanese' own. First, I give a standard Western interpretation of Javanese history and describe the city of Solo in Central Java where the research was done. Then, I try to give a Javanese perspective on history and life in general. I then discuss a key element of the Javanese perspective which is *kebatinan*, the traditional discipline of mystic practice, and relate it to the modern mystic groups which have emerged in this century. Finally, I give a brief history of the Sumarah group.

Part III outlines the basic theory and practice of Sumarah. It starts with the basic theory which is used in Sumarah practice. As is discussed more fully in Chapter 2, Orientation, the theory presented is felt to be an integral part of the translation. My intention is to relate the terms of the practice to the system of

thought which gives them meaning rather than working from roughly corresponding lexical items. The next chapter gives two somewhat simplified cases which are used to illustrate the application of these fundamental principles in a meeting.

Part IV describes advanced practice and leadership. The first chapter outlines the theory associated with development in this practice. The next describes leadership practice, techniques, and training methods. The final chapter presents illustrative cases and some Sumarah outlook. The cases are not simplified, and the outlook is standard Sumarah perspective.

The text itself is presented in Part V. Many of the cases used as illustrations were drawn from this transcript. It is a translation of a three-hour meeting held in Grogol, a town just to the south of Solo, on June 1, 1979.

* * *

An issue which I must address is the influence of my practice of Sumarah on this report. I led a weekly meeting for the last six months I was in the field. It is clear that had I not practiced it, this report would be very different. I would not have understood what they were doing. This is my basic criticism of the discussions of Javanese mysticism by Geertz (1960) and Mulder (1975). I have gone through most of what is described in this report in my own practice. In a sense, this involved a process of enculturation which meant that in practicing and guiding (leading) myself, I came to understand what was being done in its own terms. The understanding was checked again and again by the guides who taught me, the experiences of those whom I guided, my own experience, and the ever fresh

and authentic record of the meetings which is on the forty-five hours of tapes I collected. Thus, this is an insider's view of the practice. It is not my creation; it is my understanding of our theory and practice. My own story is presented in the description of the fieldwork, and I have stayed out of the actual field report as much as possible. The events described generally did not involve me, and the examples are verbatim translations from the tapes. The idea is to let the members of Sumarah speak for themselves as much as possible. My role is to use my experience to organize the presentation and to fill in any gaps that appear. Of course, another reason for taking this approach is that I feel that they have a lot to say and that they say it very well. Their system offers a profound contrast to Western thought.

One place where I was forced to depart from this close tie to quotes from the meetings was in the theory section of Part IV on advanced practice. All of the terms and continua are from the practice; but, in the context of advanced practice, they tend to be treated as common knowledge and the discussions focus on fine points. This is illustrated in some of the cases. The way that the theory is acquired by participants is not in this neat, systematized fashion but through long-term exposure to the uses of the theory in the meetings and through specific questions prompted by personal experience. The reason for this is that it is felt to be important to base theory in experience so that it be understood properly. Presenting theory without corresponding experience is felt to be a potential source of confusion. The two never get very far apart. The theory is by no means a static body of material,

and what is presented in this report is but a part of the body of theory used by Sumarah in Solo. They feel that the experiences of group members provide a format for testing, revising and adding to the body of theory. As will be discussed in the section on Sumarah history in Chapter 4, the theory and practice of this group have changed remarkably since its inception in 1935. Thus, this is an ethnography describing Sumarah, but from Sumarah's perspective this report is part of the process of testing and refining their theory and practice. This was expressed as follows by Suwondo, one of the leaders:

Actually, I can do the practice, but if I have to explain how it happens scientifically and with theory, I'm not so good, even more so if I have to write it down. Actually, though, this should be written down so that it can be understood and studied. Then the theory can be practiced, tried out. Then the experience generates theory, the theory is practiced and becomes experience. And, in fact, you progress again.
(Grogol 6/1/79: 222)

A note concerning the style of presentation is required. The spelling of Javanese and Indonesian words in the text reflects current usage. Names are given in the form used by the person himself. Citations from the meeting tapes are indicated as in the citation above. The place of the meeting is given followed by the date of the meeting. For one of the meetings, as above, page numbers are given. These refer to the translation of the meeting which is included in Part V. All of the names, except those of Suwondo and the other Sumarah guides, are fictitious. I consider the Sumarah guides to be public figures and thus have used their real names.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first debt is to the people of the city of Solo. During the two years that we lived in Solo, I gradually came to feel that I was studying a people more civilized than my own in many ways. They taught me that civilization is independent of technology and that the measure of civilization is people and the relationships people have with each other and the world they live in.

I next wish to express my appreciation to my adviser, Dr. James L. Peacock III. He helped in many ways, and my debt to him is very great.

I also wish to express my thanks to my teachers in the "art of living," first and foremost of whom are Bapak Suwondo and Bapak Suhardo. I am grateful for their time and their counsel.

I next express my gratitude to some of the people of Indonesia who helped to make my stay there pleasant. These are Dr. and Mrs. S. Harnopidjati and family of Jakarta; Mr. and Mrs. Moerdono SH; Mr. Soelarko; Mr. and Mrs. K. Adhisaputro; and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kosasih.

I also thank my colleagues in Sumarah, both the Indonesians and the Westerners. There were many; but those I must mention are Carol Block, Carol Lebrocq, and Ananda Suyono Hamongdarsono.

I next express my appreciation for the guidance of my committee. I am especially indebted to my acting chairman, Dr. Robert E. Daniels, and Dr. Julia Crane for the time they gave to correcting

this presentation. I also thank Dr. Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Dr. Terence Evens, Dr. Dorothy Clement, Dr. Berton H. Kaplan, and Dr. Norris Johnson for their assistance over the years. I also thank Dr. John U. Wolff of Cornell University who introduced me to the Indonesian language and culture. For funding, I thank Dr. James L. Peacock and Dr. Terence Evens for including me in their group project which was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health.

I thank Joseph Errington for his help with the Javanese language. I also thank Rosanne Altrows, my typist, for her good work.

I thank Professor Harsya Bachtiar for sponsoring this research and LIPI, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, for permission to carry it out.

Finally, I wish to thank my family. First, my parents for their patience and love over the years, and for the supports and criticisms I have unfailingly received from the whole family. Last, I dedicate this work to Ari, my wife.

All errors present in this work are, of course, the responsibility of the author.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

This part is in two chapters. In Chapter 1, I describe the fieldwork and my experience during the research period. In Chapter 2, I give the orientation of this report relative to some literature dealing with related topics. I also bring out some of the issues which this research raises.

CHAPTER 1

FIELDWORK

I did fieldwork for this report in Solo and the surrounding district of Surakarta between September of 1978 and July 1980. My wife and I arrived in Indonesia in the beginning of June for the Cornell Summer Institute in Advanced Indonesian Studies which was held in Malang, East Java. I had studied Indonesian for an academic year in the intensive program at Cornell before going to Indonesia. My study of Javanese began at the Summer Program. During the program, my wife and I went to Solo with one of the other students, and she introduced us to the Sumarah people there. Her name is Laurie Sears and she had spent a year practicing the meditation in Solo. This is a common thing to do. The number of Westerners studying Sumarah at any given time while I was there varied between five and fifteen, with a rough average of ten. The sort of people drawn to this study tend to be associated with the "counter-culture" and to live often as solitary drifters. Many have backgrounds involving drug use. Generally, they find their way to Solo at the recommendation of someone who has been there. This has been going on for more than ten years. The group tends to be of mixed national origin. While I was there, there were participants from the United States, Australia (the largest group), Canada, Germany, Austria, New Zealand, the Netherlands, England, Sweden, Finland, Italy, and Switzerland. The

length of a person's stay tends to be fairly restricted because of visa regulations. There is a meeting for the Westerners every day except Saturday with an English translator. The meetings are split among three leaders or guides (*pamong*). Darno Ong does the Monday, Tuesday and Thursday meetings, Suwondo leads the Wednesday and Sunday meetings, and Sri Sampoerna leads the Friday morning meeting.

We arrived in Solo in September, and at first I attended every meeting with the ten to fifteen Westerners and ten to twenty Javanese. The meetings are held in houses, tea is served, and on Monday night dinner is provided. Meetings generally last between two and a half and three hours. The meetings are quite strictly patterned. (As will be mentioned below, the Westerners' meetings are more patterned than the Javanese meetings.) First, there is a period for questions about the meditation and for discussion of problems and experiences. This is followed by a meditation, another period of questions, another meditation, and then a closing period for questions. The way that the guides respond to questions will be described below; but at first I did not understand what they were doing. I tried to be phenomenologically open to the situation; but the occasional acuity of the guides' responses was somehow disturbing. There was a tendency to look for the trick but at the same time to classify the guides as very keen observers of human nature. My most dramatic experience with this inexplicable acuity occurred almost a year later. Suhardo is one of the founding members of Sumarah, and he came over from Yogya on August 30, 1979. While he was in Solo, he guided the leader-training meeting which is in the early afternoon. I met with him in the evening; and he "accompanied"

my meditation, which means that he monitored my condition and told me what to do to improve it at the same time. I was impressed. The following is from my fieldnotes:

I asked him about the levels he had spoken about in the meeting. He then led me through a meditation. It was like someone with sight guiding a blind person across the room. Incredible specificity.

One example of this specificity came when I misunderstood an instruction. He had first instructed me to have my attention down in the heart area and then he told me to bring my attention up into the head area. I misunderstood and remained down in the heart area. After a few seconds, he said, "No, no, not down there; bring your attention up now."

My scepticism remained, but by this time I had stopped looking for a trick and had become convinced that there was something going on that I didn't understand. However, the experiences were not always so inspiring. The following is from my fieldnotes of September 17, a few weeks later.

I met with Pak Hardo in Yogya at about 12:15-1:30. It was not as impressive an experience as the initial ones from my perspective. I asked him about X [another mystic not connected with Sumarah]. He said to go into meditation and then he said that this was X, meaning that my feeling was supposed to have shifted to parallel X's. It had not. He then tried to show me Wondo with similar results.

After a few months of the Westerners' meetings, I grew very tired of them. I was having trouble with my research permission, my Javanese language studies were not progressing very rapidly, and I was forced to take the night train to Jakarta once or twice a month trying to get my visa straightened out. I lost twenty pounds. In late February, the research permission came through and I went to

Singapore to get my visa.

There were some conclusions and directions based on the first months of research as I entered into my official status. First, there was a great deal of personality conflict and confusion at the Westerners' meetings which made the practice harder to understand. Some of this interference came out of the Westerners themselves, but some of it reflected the type of Indonesian who gets involved in such mixed gatherings. A linguist friend from Malang named Jeff Dreyfus went to a meeting with me in which the elderly owner of the house got up and gave a ranting half-hour speech to the Westerners in Indonesian which most of them did not understand but whose tone was clearly hostile. Jeff remarked that a study of the group dynamics of the situation would be fascinating. I was not interested. A second impression was that there was an excessive focus on entertainment or diversion in the Westerners' meetings. This was often expressed by having someone dominate the meeting by talking and taking up the time of the guide for conversation. A third complaint that I had concerned the translation offered in the meetings. Two of the regular guides do not speak English. The translation is done by a dedicated Javanese, and this was a great service to most of the Westerners who did not speak Indonesian or Javanese. However, from my perspective, his translations were a distraction and both his understanding of the practice and his English had limitations. A fourth observation concerning the Western meetings had to do with the way the practice itself was perceived. The Western understanding of mysticism conflicts with the Javanese. The Westerners seemed to anticipate a removed, metaphysical (in some

indistinct sense), pleasant and enjoyable practice. There was often a taint of utopianism in their interest and a search for comfort or escape. I had begun to see that mysticism serves a very different function in Javanese society. I later came to realize that it is not primarily a belief, it is a practice. It is viewed as a discipline to bring one more into the world, that is, to increase awareness. The way that the Javanese see it, increasing consciousness involves facing one's life squarely. There is no running away. The experience of many of the Westerners seemed to substantiate the Javanese feeling that this can be a painful and sometimes psychologically dangerous practice for those whose lives are not yet "settled."

In March and April I started accompanying Suwondo to regular Javanese meetings. There were meetings on Monday, Thursday afternoon and evening, and Friday; and about once a month Suwondo would visit two or three meetings in towns to the south of Solo on Sunday. I also found a new language teacher, Sularko. Javanese is a very rich language with separate vocabularies for informal (*ngoko*), formal (*krama*), and highly formal (*krama inggil*) speech. The informal vocabulary is complete, the formal has about 900 words, and the highly formal has about 100 words. The formal codes supplement their vocabulary with words from the lower forms. Before too long I could converse in any one of these codes but a problem then became apparent: the conversation in the meetings was by no means restricted to these three levels of Javanese. Depending on context, Indonesian, *madya* (a middle level between high and low Javanese), *krama desa* (a rural variant of *krama* with some rustic vocabulary), and an occasional Dutch or English word are all used as additional levels of

speech by the Javanese. It was only in the last six months in the field that I was able to understand what was being said at meetings. In most conversations, I used Indonesian.

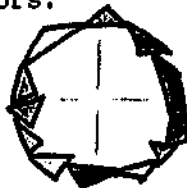
In the beginning of April, I was run over by a truck and I was laid up for nearly a month. In early June, my advisor, Dr. Peacock, came to visit and stayed with us for a month. He went to meetings with me; and his comments, support and experience were extremely helpful and welcome. One procedure started at this time was the taping of some of the meetings. I came home with about 45 hours of tapes which are the primary "data set" of this dissertation. Dr. Peacock urged me to do a transcription and translation of a complete meeting. The meeting is in Part V. Two Javanese college students did the transcription in July and August. I finished the translation by early December with the help of Sularko, Joseph Errington (a linguist doing a study of *madya*), and Suwondo. The translation was what contributed more than anything else to my understanding of the language used in the meetings and of the practice that they were discussing. I discovered that I had been introduced to a simplified version of Sumarah which roughly corresponds to the material presented in Part III of this report.

As for my own practice, I had continued to attend meetings with Suwondo while I was doing the translation. My experience with the meditation went through a number of phases. The initial phase was when I was attending the Westerners' meetings. I felt intellectually constipated. There seemed to be something going on that was worth reporting but I could not figure out how to get at it. The second period started after my return from Singapore when I

started to attend the Javanese meetings. I did not understand much of what was going on at first, but the approach seemed more proper in some sense. In June of 1979, I had an experience which Suwondo had called the reception of *rasa*. The term will be discussed below, but it very roughly means "feeling." The experience was my first of undivided reception. It was rather like coming out of the cave where I habitually hid, which was my thoughts. The experience itself was stark and simple, and I felt exposed and somehow vulnerable. It was unconsidered and uncontrolled; and when I tried to analyze it while it was happening, it disappeared. According to the practice, this was my first experience where the immediacy of the reception of the moment managed to get around the interference of thought. For the most part, the meditation involves learning to bring one's attention into the present and relaxing the tensions one finds in one's body and thoughts. It takes a long time to develop a stable awareness. After the experience which was termed the reception of *rasa*, in July, August, and September I found myself doing a lot of snoozing during the meditations. I would go into a meeting very alert, and within five or ten minutes of starting the meditation, I would be asleep. Eventually I sheepishly asked about this and was told that it was a form of *luyut* (which will be described below) which was a transitional stage between a thought-oriented perspective and a *rasa*-oriented perspective. The following comes from my field notes of September 25:

During the first meditation I was trying to open to my body and for a time was pretty successful. Body awareness increased and body image [perception] increased in size. I felt a kind of thickening of energy in the chest area which was new. Then I got tired and ended my meditation before the others. During

the question period I did some further meditation and found myself in a place inside with visual components. It looked like this but with colors.



There were fixed, solid, angular shapes around the rim with various colors. Inside was a soft, light, white-blue, star-type light. I entered and the boundaries [rim] disappeared. It was blue light from here to eternity. Very pleasant and it was as if this was fundamental. There was nothing behind it. There were no words, just wisdom at the base of everything. I was impressed, and that startled me out of it.

This experience was identified as the reception of the "true teacher," which will be described below. It was a one-of-a-kind experience; however, the increase in perceived body size was very common. I speculated as follows in my field notes of September 29:

I suspect that this sensation of increased [body] size during meditation has to do with an increased appreciation of the information which is present. If you perceive more of the detail, it fills out and seems bigger. It also spreads things out. Whereas previously two sensations would seem the same, when they are spread out [in the larger frame] each has its own source and meaning.

On November 11, Suwondo started to give me training in the techniques of guiding. The simplest form is called "checking." Previous to the checking, one enters a calm, relaxed meditation in which the tension is cleared from the body and mind. The idea is that when the body is not taken up with its own tensions, it becomes a potential receptor of the condition of other people. When your state is relaxed and calm, your attention is "flashed" on the person being checked. The attention is then returned to your own body, and the changes are noted. Answers are given based on these changes. My first attempt at checking is described as follows in my fieldnotes:

Rudi [a young Javanese man] asked to be checked and Pak Wondo told me to do it. Rudi had told me his present state, so I may have been influenced. First, nothing, then a feeling of tension in the back of the abdomen. I said that there was tension in the stomach area and like a bubbling of ideas. Pak Wondo said that this was right. He said that this was an opening of elements in the unconsciousness.

Once your meditation gets to a certain point, acquiring the techniques is a matter of trial and error. The training was of various kinds and in various situations. I went to Yogya with Suwondo to visit Suhardo. I rode on the back of his scooter, and he quizzed me on the way. The following is from my fieldnotes of December 16:

On the way, Pak Wondo had me check him first to see where his attention was. It was in the middle of the back. Then to check his condition. On the second I got some sort of thinking. He said that the reception was right but that he was receiving a kind of grace and that the two look alike if you don't know. He described the problems of distinguishing between the inner voice and something coming out of ego. He said that it is sometimes hard to distinguish. Sometimes you must rely on reality to distinguish for you.

In October, Suwondo recommended that I start attending his Wednesday and Sunday Westerners' meetings. I started trying to translate and answer questions for the Westerners, and in early December I was asked by the Westerners to start a weekly meeting. I saw myself more in the role of someone who understood the language and thus could phrase some of the practice in more familiar terms, but I tried to guide the meeting in the normal fashion which meant meditations and checking. It was not a comfortable role to settle into because when it is done correctly, there is a lack of ego involvement and control; but, at the same time, the ego is sure to take delight in the new status at first. The following is from December 16:

I told Pak Wondo that guiding was bad for the ego. He said that you get used to it. He also said that he doesn't like to be believed as an individual. That is bad for the ego.

It is better to accept what comes to you and trust in reality to show if it's right or not. Too much belief is bad for the believer because it blocks out experience and it is bad for the one believed in because it inflates his ego.

The following are my notes about a meeting on December 31:

Another meeting with Cathy, Judy and Ralph in the morning. I was shaky at the start coming from ego. The meeting went okay. I still felt a little overwhelmed. The meeting was taped, and a couple of interesting images came out. One was that emotion and thought combine together to form kind of rooms which are attitudes or stances. There are lots of these and one [the ego] usually spends one's time going from room to room. However, there is one room which when entered turns out to have no walls or ceiling, no thoughts or emotions. This is the present, the real relationship with reality, and the meditation is designed to help you find this room and to get used to being there and relating from there.

It is felt that the act of guiding is an important teacher. This will be discussed more fully in the text. However, the following notes are from a meeting on February 9 and they illustrate this and show some of the accommodations I made in trying to adjust to the role:

Acting as a guide is extremely educational. One learns about the material as it comes out of one's mouth. For example, a great deal of emphasis has come out on physical, emotional, and body awareness; that is, not approaching and attempting to control emotional responses in the mind but, rather, going directly to the emotional tension in the body and releasing it there. The idea is that emotions and thought are connected but that the use of ideas [thought] to control emotion is inappropriate, evasive and messy. The guiding continues to upset me at times both in terms of doubts about my capacity and in the stresses and confusions which arise in the meetings. Ego involvement is still there but [the meetings] have gotten a bit more usual. One change has been to have them [the participants] do some of the meditation guidance. It helps spread around some of the burden and gives me a chance to relax in the meditation while giving them a chance to see how involving trying to lead the meditations is and how difficult it sometimes is.

It is felt that guiding must be spontaneous if it is to be done properly. This caused me a great deal of confusion. The way

this is presented is to say that it is very much like any other capacity that the body has. An example of their appreciation of the body as a "tool" is in the sense of hearing. One can say that, "I can hear," but, more literally, it is obviously not the "I" which performs the function of hearing but the ear and it is the tool itself which does the hearing. The "I" just receives the result. Similarly, but in this case with a learned capacity, one can say that, "I can speak," but the "I" cannot pretend to control or understand the capacity or tool of language which Chomsky calls the "language acquisition device." The techniques of guiding are viewed in the same way. From my own experience, I found some of the techniques much easier to accept than others. When I did the others there was always a sense of intellectual unease or frustration. One of these was checking a person's experiences in the past. In checking in the past a person asks about his condition at some previous time by giving the hour and day. My intellect always protested that it did not make sense. The following are some instances of this technique from my notes of February 29:

Meeting in Colomadu [Kartasura] with Pak Wondo, Pak Easno, Ari [my wife] and about 35 teenagers. I have never seen so many teenagers at a meeting. Pak Wondo had me do some checking. The first one asked about his trip to the meeting. I asked him if he had been frightened and it turned out that he had been attacked by a dog. A second asked about a pain two days before in her chest, and I said that it was tension. She asked what was causing it, and I asked what she was worried about. She turned all red and embarrassed and didn't respond. Another asked about an experience the week before and whether she had been right or not. I replied that she was right but that she was forcing [the position was true but it was coupled with an improper emotion]. I didn't understand the interchange she had with Pak Wondo about it, but he said that it was correct. Last night [the 28th] at Grogol, I checked Dewi [who is prominent in the cases material] for that afternoon and asked what she had been so worried about. It turned out that a child in her class had some sort of attack.

Thus, in one sense, the meditation can be viewed as a process of acquiring capacities or tools through the practice of a relaxed reception of the present. However, on a deeper level, the increased sensitivity and receptivity of the present is the primary goal and the capacities are incidental. Increasing the accuracy of reception is felt necessarily to involve a broadening of perspective which is connected with changes in attitude and understanding. In my case this was certainly true, but I will leave the discussion and illustration of the nature of these changes to the text.

Beginning in August of 1979, I started to write in order to clarify my thinking and to highlight areas that I did not understand. In February, I started to write in earnest; and most of Parts II and III were completed in the field. During the last six months in the field, my time was divided between going to meetings, guiding and writing. This worked well, in that it gave the opportunity to check understandings with the guides and in practice and it also made it possible to get feedback on what came out from those able to evaluate it in terms of their own experience and understanding. During the two years that I was in Solo, I estimate that I went to about 250 meetings and guided 30.

CHAPTER 2

ORIENTATION

In preface to my discussion of some literature related to the topic of this report, I would like to say generally that the theory and practice that I will be presenting in this report pose a profound challenge to our system of thought. They make it seem to me that we have been observing humanity while looking through the wrong end of the telescope.

In this chapter, I will relate this research to some of the literature dealing with similar topics. First, I will comment on Clifford Geertz' *The Religion of Java* (1960). I will then consider Mulder's 1975 dissertation, *Mysticism and Daily Life in Contemporary Java: A Cultural Analysis of Javanese Worldview and Ethic as Embodied in Kebatinan and Everyday Experience*. Third, I will discuss Bateson's "Bali: The Value System of a Steady State" (1972, originally 1949). Fourth, I will look at Bateson and Mead's presentation in *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis* (1942).

Clifford Geertz' *Religion of Java* (1960) is a compendious source on Javanese thought. Geertz describes the basic character of mysticism in Java and gives an overall impression of its central place in Javanese culture. However, his approach is an intellectual assessment of what can be properly evaluated only by practice. In translating the terms of Javanese mysticism into English, he is

tacitly assuming worldview-to-worldview correspondence. It does not exist. The ideas he is translating do not have usable parallels in English. The reason for this is that although these terms can be lexically typed, unless the English term is translated into the context of the Javanese thought system, it reflects a very different configuration of meanings and associations. Thus, Geertz goes up to the edge of the Western system of information; but, as Javanese mysticism is not contained within it, his description is necessarily misconstrued.

The terms which fall off the English map tend to be the most profound and integrative concepts in the Javanese system. Two examples of this are *tentrem ing manah* and *rasa*. Geertz (1960: 310) translates *tentrem ing manah* as "peace (quiet, tranquility) in the heart (the seat of the emotions)." This state is the result of a practice, and Geertz describes this practice as aiming "to minimize the passions altogether so far as possible, to mute them in order to perceive the truer 'feelings' which lie behind them." Geertz draws a psychopathological inference concerning this practice and emphasizes its repressive character while depicting (1960: 241) it as, "flattening of affect."

Tentrem ing manah presents a very different picture when viewed from within the practice. Briefly, the aim of the practice is not to "mute" or "minimize" the emotions by denying or controlling them, but, rather, to increase one's reception of stimulæ. This increased reception is associated with broadening one's perspective and puts the experience into a calmer, more stable frame. In this it is analogous to broadening one's visual perspective. Focusing

on detail limits perspective and makes the object seem bigger than it is if it is viewed in a broader frame. When perspective is broadened, the object does not change, but its relative appearance does. It is the same with affect. Just as a person looked at against a vast panoramic view tends to fade in apparent significance, so, too, emotions tend to lose their compelling importance when viewed in a broader, more universal frame of experience. The Javanese train themselves to receive whatever comes into their experience. They view emotion as information about one's inner state and the state of the world around one. The faculty of reception is what is termed *rasa* in Javanese mystic practice. Geertz (1960: 238) gives two definitions for *rasa* which are "feeling" and "meaning." In doing so he maintains a Cartesian split between body (feeling) and mind (meaning) which does not exist in the Javanese system. In fact, *rasa* is one thing, just as experience is one thing. Again, in terms of vision, looking at something is using one's vision but it does not define vision. In the same sense, the meaning and feeling combined in any experience is *rasa*, but *rasa* is also the capacity to experience itself. Geertz does quite well in placing these terms in the context of Western thought; the problem is that they do not fit.

Niels Mulder's dissertation, *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java* (1975), gives a critical view of Javanese society. Mulder's strength is social criticism. He stresses examining the way in which traditional culture interferes with the process of modernization. Mulder's treatment of mysticism is more detailed than Geertz'; however, he did not practice it either and does not

depart much from Geertz' perspective. His work is not well unified, but it provides a sympathetic critique of contemporary Indonesia.

Bateson (1972) and Bateson and Mead (1942) expose the profound gap between the Javanese and Balinese systems and the level of analysis used in Western thought. In effect, these studies go to the edge of Western scientific knowledge and point at and speculate on what those people are doing out there. They raise two important issues. First, in Bateson (1972), what is the working unit of human experience and does it vary from group to group? Second, in Bateson and Mead (1942), how is this variation in social group reflected in the content of the experience of the members of the group?

Gregory Bateson (1972) discusses the problem he had when trying to analyze Balinese society in "Bali: The Value System of a Steady State." He was forced to an examination of epistemology by the lack of fit between the Balinese system and the analytic tools he was trying to use. Bateson identifies the source of this discrepancy as lying in the appreciation of what a human being is in a social setting applied in Bali. His discussion examines how the Western notion of interaction, as exemplified by Von Neumannian games theory, fails to apply in the examination of Balinese culture. Games theory assumes two things which did not fit in Bali. First, it assumes ego-centricity in social action. Second, it assumes maximization of partial goals (money, position, etc.) as the aim of the members of the system. In assuming ego-centricity, it assumes that the motivation of a person's strategy of interaction is personal gain. Bateson looked around in Bali and found much behavior which did not conform to this. Bateson (1972: 116) says that, "it is

immediately clear to any visitor of Bali that the driving force for cultural activity is not [emphasis his] either acquisitiveness or crude physiological need." Bateson notes (in passing) that Balinese theory seems to fit their behavior much more closely than any theory that he brought with him. They saw their defining unit as the group or community (1972: 118) and themselves as functional components of this group identity. Bateson examines the Balinese system as an expression of their child-rearing techniques wherein a "continuing plateau of intensity is substituted for climaxes as the child becomes more fully adjusted to Balinese life." He then (1972: 113) makes his famous imputation of a lack of orgasm in Balinese sexual relations. He then gives other examples of what he calls the "steady state" of the Balinese system as opposed to the climactic emphasis of the Western system. These include attitudes about money and property, music, reward for service, and their love and self-denying identification with the larger group of their community identity. Bateson then concludes by contrasting the games theory notion of human behavior, which he calls a "schizmogonic" (an odd term) system, with the steady state of Balinese society, and he goes on to say that more research is needed to see how the Balinese system fits into the Western model.

The problem is that neither the Balinese nor the closely related Javanese system fit into a games theory appreciation of human behavior. As Bateson (1972: 116) notes, "there are very few Balinese who have the idea of steadily maximizing their wealth or property; those few are partly disliked and partly regarded as oddities." Neither the Javanese nor the Balinese maximize partial (material)

goals or personal experience, they maximize (the term seems very crude) total experience. The child-rearing techniques and character formation of the Balinese are related to this not so much in the unconscious attitudes or pre-dispositions that they instill as in the ability to be openly receptive for which the child-rearing techniques are part of the training. Like the Javanese, the Balinese key their system not on maximizing one's emotional condition, which is quietly at the base of games theory, but on learning how to receive one's total experience accurately, which involves a Balinese form of *tentrem ing manah*. As for climaxes, neither the Balinese nor the Javanese *avoid* climaxes, but they believe that climaxes are not appropriate in most situations (in sex they are). That is, in most of the situations associated with climaxes in Western thought, the climax is manufactured rather than an accurate reception of one's situation. Thus, the climax is a kind of self-constructed diversion of entertainment. According to the Javanese and Balinese systems, the point is not to assert one's own version of reality (which is what emotion is) but to learn to receive what is actually there accurately.

Both the Javanese and the Balinese assert that what one receives when one succeeds in opening oneself to receive the world is an awareness of how tightly one's experience is connected with the people around one. On the basis of my own experience in practicing and teaching Javanese mysticism, I must assert that they are right. According to my experience, the Javanese and Balinese understanding of the group entity which informs their experience is not simply a symbolic expression of group solidarity, but an accurate

depiction of the nature of a group in which the members have attained this degree of open reception and wherein the many levels of human interconnectedness become apparent. Thus, according to their experience (and mine), the working unit of human experience is basically the group.

The question is why the working unit appears to be the individual in Western society and how open reception is reflected in individual "psychology." This can be brought out in the examination of Bateson and Mead's (1942), *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis*. Bateson and Mead founded much of their argument concerning Balinese character on their child-rearing techniques and on posture. The practices depicted are almost identical to those practiced in Java (see Hildred Geertz 1961). I do not dispute the data on which Bateson's and Mead's conclusions are based except in tone. Bateson and Mead (Barnouw 1973: 256) felt that Balinese infants were "overstimulated and unrewardingly teased." We never saw any indication of this in Bali or Java. The tone of this attribution seems strange. We were in Bali for a month and lived in a poor family compound for a week. We saw none of the cold-hearted teasing described by Bateson and Mead. In Java, infants are the center of a family's existence. They are constantly played with, carried around, fondled and loved. From what we saw of Bali, it seemed to have the same tone. This was also reported by Hildred Geertz (1961) in Java. For example, one of the behaviors which Bateson and Mead class as teasing is the habit that Balinese mothers have of playing with an infant boy's penis. Hildred Geertz also found this in Java, but the tone that she attributes to it is playful and affectionate. In fact, the

gentlest term of affection for a boy is *lê* which means penis while for a girl it is *nduk* which means vagina (H. Geertz 1961: 102).

It is my contention that the general population in Bali and Java are trained to much greater sensitivity and accuracy in relating to and receiving the information which comes in to them from experience. On this level, child-rearing practices and general behavior postures and attitudes can be seen as an outgrowth of and a preparation for the mystic practice which nearly everyone undertakes in one form or another in later life. This universal practice was primarily observed in Central Java. The Balinese seemed to have a slightly different, more community-oriented and ceremonial emphasis in their practice. The pervasiveness of mystic attitudes and practice in Java will be discussed below; however, one Javanese attitude which is germane to the connection between child-rearing and mystic practice is the way that they view infancy. Infancy is viewed as one of the most open and sensitive periods of human development. The Javanese cherish and protect this openness in bringing up their children. In terms of mystic practice, the point of this is to try not to drive a child too far away from this open receptivity during the course of his/her development so as to make it easier to return to this level of sensitivity in maturity.

Bateson and Mead (1942:26-7) attribute a schizoid component to the Balinese character. I disagree. My own understanding is that what Bateson and Mead were ascribing to schizoid withdrawal can more usefully be viewed as a reflection of the difference in the level of sensitivity normally maintained by a person in the West and the level of sensitivity characteristic of the Balinese. I also

contend that this is the factor underlying the difference between the Balinese and the Western views of what a human being is. Behavior based on greater receptivity and sensitivity is necessarily different from that which is based on a narrower, more restrictive reception of experience. The tendency in the West is to connect high intensity and sensitivity with two things. First, it is connected with art and creativity. Second, it is connected with insanity. The Javanese believe that insanity reflects a mystic level of sensitivity without the mystic discipline necessary to give it stability. One result of increasing sensitivity is the reception of pain both from the unconscious and from the world around one. Two aspects can be attributed to sensitivity. The first relates to the defensive responses of trying to accommodate the unlabeled pain that it introduces. The second is the direct, relational consequences of receiving the world more accurately and in a broader experiential perspective. My contention is that the Balinese and Javanese social forms reflect one level of sensitivity and the social forms and attitudes in the West reflect other levels. I am tempted to contend as well that social change works against sensitivity and intensity by making the context less well known, and thus harder to receive and to relate to.

At the beginning of this chapter, I remarked that the Western sciences observe humanity while looking through the wrong end of the telescope. My meaning was almost literal. The Javanese hold that the body is an instrument which receives information about itself and about the world. It is a very complex and subtle receptor. The Javanese hold that there are various levels of understanding

which conform to and relate to varying degrees of sensitivity. Their appreciation is that the less perceptual breadth, the less of the world that is referenced in an observation. Thus, correspondingly, the greater the sensitivity of a response, the more that an observation based on it will be true, reflective of that which is observed, and the more reliable it will be. Of the levels of understanding which will be discussed below, the least receptive and narrowest understanding is thought. We never get farther away from the world or from each other than when we relate based on our thoughts.

The human sciences espouse objectivity; but this objectivity is attained by limiting input, by training the academic to relate from the experientially isolated realm of thought. It is rigid objectivity, a posture attained and maintained by controlling what is received, rather than being openly receptive and objective, which is the state that the Javanese call *tentrem ing manah* or, in the particular group that I studied, "neutrality" (*tenang*). Equating these two conditions was the mistake pointed out above in Geertz' assertion that the Javanese try to "minimize the emotions." The Javanese recognize that the ego can repress the emotions and enforce calm, but this is different from the neutrality which arises from the breadth of perspective of non-judgmental receptivity. The Javanese believe that this is a universal human capacity, in which we all start out as infants, but it must be trained before it can be actualized in maturity.

PART II

JAVA

In this Part, I will give two perspectives on Java. In Chapter 3, I will present a Western perspective on Javanese history and the fieldsite, the city of Solo in Central Java. In Chapter 4, I will try to give a Javanese perspective on history and life in general. I will start by describing the Javanese understanding of history and then consider their approach to daily life. I will then discuss traditional mysticism and the modern groups which have grown out of it. Finally, I will give a brief account of the history and development of Sumarah.

CHAPTER 3

A WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

In this chapter, I will briefly describe Java. In the first section, I will give an outline of Javanese history. In the second section, I will describe the site of the fieldwork, the court city of Solo in Central Java.

A Sketch of Javanese History

Javanese culture has been depicted as syncretic (cf. Geertz 1960). It is indeed a mixture and amalgamation of many influences and traditions. However, there is an element of eclecticism which informs the selection and mode of assimilation of foreign influences and bespeaks the strength and durability of the aboriginal culture.

The beginning of Javanese history, as expressed in artifacts, dates from the same time as the beginning of the Christian era. The first major external culture to come to Java was India and this reflected Java's position on the sea route from India to China. Notable contributions of the Indians included international trade, religions (Hinduism and Buddhism), language and writing (clearly not all who came to Java were merchants, Sanskrit was used in many early inscriptions and Old Javanese is heavily Sanskrit in vocabulary), and the concept and practice of divine kingship (*dewaraja*) and court life. By 500 A.D. there were Buddhist kingdoms in Java. The influence started in the courts and cities and only very

gradually filtered down to life in the rural villages (*desa*). By the time it got to the *desa*, a great deal of selection and assimilation had taken place and it had become Javanese. The political high point of this process was the Majapahit Empire (ca. 1293-1525), which was centered in East Java but controlled much of what is present-day Indonesia. The capacity for syncretic assimilation of foreign cultural influences while maintaining and expressing basic Javanese cultural integrity comes out in many of the remains from those times. Many of the physical remnants of the Indic period are temples. A few of these temples, like Borobudur, are Buddhist. Borobudur was constructed around 800 A.D. and is one of the largest Buddhist temple structures in the world. Most of the temple remains are predominantly Hindu like the Prambanan complex. However, there is a strong tendency toward admixture. There are some Hindu elements at Borobudur, for example, and the two religions are not distinguished in a particularly clear fashion. However, there is a strong underlying strain of native Javanese animism which is often expressed in the temples (e.g., at Candi Sukuh and even more dramatically in some of the less prominent temples and sacred groves in the Gunung Lawu area).

There are also living links with that culture in the form of various isolated and conservative groups. Desa culture in the Indic period is probably fairly well indicated by the Tengger. The Tengger are mostly located in the mountainous region around Gunung Bromo in East Java. They have maintained a culture, which, while nominally Hindu/Buddhist, retains strong elements of animism. Their social organization is small scale, and their geographic situation

has allowed them to watch the coming and going of waves of influence (probably to some extent including the Indic) from a position of virtual impunity. Another more or less direct link with the Majapahit is to be found in Bali. Bali was conquered by Gajah Madah, and became part of the Majapahit Empire in the middle of the fourteenth century. When the empire fell, much of the court fled to Bali; and the ceremonialized and refined culture found in Bali has been isolated since that time and provides a good indication of the nature of court and city life during the Majapahit. The Dutch did not have much use for the island (cf. Hall 1968: 277; Geertz 1963: 17-27); and it was only in 1906, when the royal family and retainers of the kingdom of Badung committed a form of ritual suicide by walking into Dutch gunfire, that Dutch colonial administration began.

The connection between the rise of Islam and the demise of the Majapahit is not clear from the available sources (Ricklefs 1974: 1-4). It is clear that after the Majapahit fell, the center of power shifted to the Northern coastal trading cities which were centers of Islam. The most prominent Javanese history of this period, the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, gives the Islamic forces from these cities an important role in the overthrow of the Majapahit. According to tradition, Islam was spread by nine holy warriors and teachers (*wali sanga*). They are said to have spread Islam by means of war, teaching, and by demonstrating its power in contests with traditional Javanese holy men. Islam was present throughout the Majapahit (Jay 1963: 106-107; Ricklefs 1974: 3); however, the way in which it spread from the coastal cities into the interior is not known. However, it is clear that the Islam which was introduced was the mystical Sufi

variant which was dominant throughout the Muslim world in that period (Hodgson 1974: 549). If its spread was a primarily urban phenomenon and only slowly seeped into the agricultural and partially autonomous *desa*, it might be seen to parallel the adoption of modernization.

The mystical practices of Sufi did not constitute a particularly major break from the Hindu-Buddhist tradition in Java. A story from this period depicts Seh Siti Jenar, one of the nine *wali*, condemned to death by a synod of the nine *wali* for expressing mystical heresy. Ricklefs (1974: 7) translates Seh Siti Jenar's response to the emissaries summoning him to the synod as, "Know, you two, that Siti Jenar does not exist, now it is Allah who appears; report this." Later, his statement to the head of the synod was, "There is no Friday, there is no mosque, only Allah indeed exists. There is nothing other which now has existence." There are direct modern parallels to these beliefs expressed in Javanese mysticism as will be illustrated below; and, indeed, Ricklefs (1974: 8) notes:

It is a moot point whether Siti Jenar was condemned to death for the heretical nature of his doctrine, or simply because he made that doctrine public, to the uninitiated.

In a sense, Islam did not so much replace Hindu-Buddhism as join it in the Javanese mixture.

Around 1600, the first political synthesis of the Islamic and Javanese traditions arose in the form of the Mataram Empire (Moertono 1968; Ricklefs 1974, 1978). The Mataram dynasty was founded by Panembahan Senapati Ingalaga (1574?-1601). It reached its apex of power under Sultan Agung (1613-1645). It was a period of war in which Mataram tried to subdue all other political entities. For five successive years, he led campaigns against Surabaya until

its surrender in 1625. Sultan Agung unified most of Java, but, in 1628, and again in 1629, he led disastrous campaigns against the Dutch in Batavia (Jakarta). The rest of his reign was spent consolidating the empire and his personal interest turned to the practice of mysticism.

Around 1600, the Dutch arrived in the Indonesian archipelago and dislodged the Portuguese, who had been present since about 1500. The semi-autonomous Dutch representative was the United East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*) which is generally abbreviated as VOC. The VOC did not have the men or equipment to dominate Java physically. However, under the successors to Sultan Agung, the Mataram Empire began to disintegrate into dynastic factions and wars. The Dutch were eventually drawn into this struggle, and the VOC operated at a loss in Java.

One result of the long series of intra-dynastic wars was the cleavage of the Mataram into separate kingdoms. In 1755, it split into Surakarta and Yogyakarta, with Surakarta being the senior line. In 1757, Surakarta was again sub-divided, and the kingdom of Mangkunegaran created. In 1813, Yogyakarta split again and the Pakualaman court was established. These royal families were all descendants of Sultan Agung, but the rivalries between the court of the Pakubuwana in Surakarta (the oldest line) and the court of Hamengkubuwana in Yogyakarta, and between Pakubuwana and the court of Mangkunegara also in Surakarta were bitter (see Ricklefs 1974 for a Yogyane perspective on this rivalry).

There was a conscious element of *divide et impera* in the VOC's policies but their political and military involvement and the

turmoil in Java at that time, did not support trade. Ricklefs (1974: 26-36) depicts the VOC as "spoilers" who kept the dynastic struggle from resolving into a unified succession. However, an additional outcome of this involvement was the bankruptcy of the VOC at the close of the eighteenth-century.

During the Napoleonic wars, Java was occupied first by the French and then by the English under Raffles. Raffles' *History of Java* (1817) provides an excellent picture of Java and the prevailing attitudes of the time. Directive colonial involvement began at this time. After the Dutch returned in 1816, the Java War (1825-1830) broke out. The Javanese leader was Prince Dipanegara (Carey 1976), who was from the Yogya royal family. As in most popular uprisings in Java (Jay 1963: 11), there was a strong Islamic element in the revolt. Prince Dipanegara felt his mission to be spiritual as well as military and described it as (Carey 1976: 76): "Raising up the high state of the Islamic religion in Java" (*Ngluhurken Agami Islam wonten ing Tanah Jawi sadaya*). His raising of Islam specifically involved opposing the moral influence of the Dutch and of the Javanese who served them. The war was an expensive one for the Dutch but after Dipanegara was taken into custody during a meeting set up for negotiations, the rebellion was quelled, and the Dutch colonial administration of Java began.

The Dutch used the Javanese elite and did not often interfere in local politics (see Sutherland 1980 for a balanced discussion of Dutch colonial administration). The Dutch colonial system in Java was run with an eye on maximum profit. The opium business, which was condemned by Raffles (1817), provides an unsavory but not

unusual example. In the late nineteenth century the Dutch maintained a directive monopoly on the import and sale of opium. The raw opium was sold to the Chinese middlemen, who bought contracts for distribution rights and maintained a whole processing, distributing and retail (opium dens) system for sale of the opium to the Javanese. Around 1900 the Dutch administrators decided that they could make a better profit with more executive control if the opium business were directly run by the Dutch. The Dutch set up a factory, and, for a time, the purest refined opium in the world was made in Batavia. The opium was marked with the Dutch royal coat of arms and also with a chemical trace element to make it easier to distinguish it from smuggled goods. A distribution system was set up, and the profits did increase.

While the Dutch used the courts and the Javanese aristocrats (Sutherland 1980) to control civil administration, they employed the Chinese as middlemen and go-betweens in their economic exploitation of Java. The Chinese still bear much of this stigma.

The twentieth century brought a rise in nationalism which, although carefully repressed by the Dutch administrators, continued to increase in following. In 1942 Java was occupied by the Japanese. The Japanese presented themselves as the liberators of Java from the Dutch colonialists, but the Japanese rule was a singularly brutal period of exploitation (cf. Idrus 1978). However, the Japanese did institute mandatory military training called *Peta* (*Pembela Tanah Air*). This training was very useful to the Javanese in their fight against the Dutch which carried on from 1945 to 1949 when independence was established (see Anderson 1972 for a detailed analysis of this period).

The Indonesia Republic was founded on the "Five Principles" (*panca sīla*) first expressed by Sukarna on June 1, 1945 (Dahm 1971: 101). The five principles are belief in God, national consciousness, humanism, social justice, and sovereignty of the people (Mulder 1975: 2). With this as its often avowed basis, the Indonesian search for a government adequate to their social and developmental needs has been marked by three rather distinct periods (Dahm 1971). The initial period immediately following the revolution was one of "Parliamentary Democracy" based on Western liberal conceptions of government. This period went from independence in 1949 through the rise of Sukarno around 1956. During this time, the position of president, which was held by Sukarno, was primarily symbolic, and executive power rested in cabinets which were directly responsible to parliament. The social group most represented in this government was the Western educated elite (*priyayi*). The most important of the parties represented in parliament were the PNI (nationalists), Masyumi (Islamic modernists), and the PKI (communist party). At the time of the foundation of the republic, the Muslim reformists had agitated for the formation of an Islamic republic. The failure of this proposal tells a great deal about the nature of Islam in Java. Mulder (1975: 1) estimates that of the Javanese Muslim population, 5-10 percent are probably of the reformist and purist variety, about 30 percent are more syncretic, and the remainder consider themselves nominal Muslims; that is, they profess Islam for purposes of religious identification for the government, but their beliefs are founded in the Javanese synthesis of Hindu-Buddhism, Islam and mysticism. My own impression was that the strength of the first two groups has

increased recently in the Solo area. One sign of this was a visible increase in the number of women using "orthodox" veils during our stay.

Another expression of Javanese Islamic practice is a tendency to separate religious and political spheres. Thus, Java is 90 percent Muslim but in the 1955 elections, the Islamic parties received only 42 percent of the vote nationally and only 30.3 percent of the vote in Central Java (Mulder 1975: 6). By the mid-fifties, the experiment in Parliamentary Democracy had been compromised by factionalism and corruption. The corruption was in part connected with the influence on international business concerns. Sukarno presented his program of "Guided Democracy," and, by 1957, the power and the spirit of the government was dominated by Sukarno's approach.

Sukarno called himself "the mouthpiece of the people" (*penyambung lidah rakyat*), and tied into a popularized version of the *dewaraja* tradition. He presented himself as the mystical embodiment of the will of his people. Sukarno made the following statement at the beginning of the period of "guided democracy" (Dahm 1971: 191):

Why is it that the masses beg me to speak to them? Because they want to hear their own thoughts, which they cannot yet formulate themselves.

His period was one of grand schemes and lofty rhetoric. For example, on January 1, 1961, Sukarno proclaimed a development plan which was structurally written in a form which gave the date of the Indonesian declaration of independence, August 17, 1945. It was written in eight books, seventeen volumes, and 1,945 paragraphs (Sievers 1974: 220). He made an attempt to subsume ideological factions in a global,

anti-imperialistic synthesis of nationalist, Islamic and communist groups. Economically he stressed independence and nationalization, and international money stopped flowing into Indonesia (Sievers 1974: 221). During the implementation of this "theater state," inflation and corruption became rampant, and a thriving black market developed. The opposition came to feel that while much had been proposed, little had been accomplished. The PKI was a primary vehicle for the expression of discontent (Peacock 1968) although Sukarno's ties with the communists got stronger over the years. On September 30, 1965, an abortive coup, which came to be called GESTAPU, was attempted by the PKI. Six generals, who were members of the general staff, were murdered. On October 1, the army, led by General Suharto, launched a counter-coup which eventually resulted in the liquidization of the Indonesian Communist Party. During the next several months, several hundred thousand communists and sympathisers were killed by army controlled, though often youth enacted, assassination squads (Sievers 1974: 180-182). Sukarno was implicated in the GESTAPU affair, and he was eased out of power during the following months. In March of 1966, he signed a document which transferred power to Suharto (Sievers 1974: 184).

The contrast between Sukarno's dramatic "theater state" and Suharto's stolid, apolitical "New Order" (*Orde Baru*) is sharp. Suharto has sought to eliminate ideology in politics and the government non-party party, GOLKAR, presents no ideological position. The army became the primary source of governmental leadership and also stretched into government controlled or regulated businesses (e.g., oil and teak). Corruption continues and while inflation has been

curtailed to some extent, it remains a problem. The focus of the Suharto government has been stability and development. A great deal of oil and international money has flowed into the country and while there has been sharp (though subdued) criticism of the fact that most of it remains in Jakarta (and that a great deal of it finds its way into a general's pocket), still, there is more money and consumer wealth present today than ever before. However, there is still a huge gap between the people of the *desa* and those who are tied into the new economic system. Movie theaters provide an indication of this trend. In Solo, the cheapest movie theater has shows for 185 Rupiahs (about \$.30) while in Jakarta there is a theater which charges up to 10,000 Rupiahs (about \$16).

The government is repressive of criticism. There were student demonstrations in the spring of 1978 which were put down by a heavy show of military power; but, in general, supervision and repression are subtle, and the feeling that most people seem to have about their government is reservedly positive.

Solo and Surakarta

Contemporary Indonesia is in the throes of modernization. A kind of urban continuum stretches from Jakarta to the country (*desa*). Jakarta is very modernized and westernized. The population is alienated, isolated, fragmented and tends to be either remarkably rich or extremely poor. There is a bustling way of life in Jakarta, which, from one perspective, is very modern but from another seems un-Indonesian. It both attracts and repels the rest of Indonesia which views it on the television and in movies. It is seen as representing a kind of freedom and at the same time as necessarily

involving isolation. Jakarta is a city of more than five million inhabitants. Moving down the continuum a bit, one comes to other big cities like Surabaya, Semarang and Denpasar, which, while not as rich as Jakarta, have many of its characteristics and acquire more every year. These are all big, modern cities with all that that implies. Moving down the urban continuum again one encounters cities like Solo and Yogya which are typified by a more obvious and wide-ranging contrast between traditional society and the overlay of "Jakartanized," westernized cultures. The kinds of contrasts in attitude and behavior that this involves will be illustrated by the presentation in Chapter 4. Most of this westernized element is generated by the young, and they are reminiscent of teenagers in America in the 1950s. Here the symbol of freedom and mobility is not the car but the motorcycle. The youth seem to believe that these new times demand a fresh perspective and that their youthful flexibility makes them fit the role. They are optimistic, exuberant, modern and clearly separated from the traditional folk both in their attitudes and in their material goods. Every morning the streets are literally covered with children in uniforms on their bicycles or motorcycles going to school. As the continuum continues from the Solo/Yogya type of city out to the desa, one finds less and less modernization until, in the deep desa, life has been virtually untouched by modernization. In most places there is no electricity; and, though motorcycles have entered, they are still less than common.

Solo is the senior of the two traditional court centers of Central Java--Solo and Yogya. The population of Solo was 444,221 according to the census of 1978. The main streets of the city have

recently been widened, and the stores and houses that line them are generally new and modern in design. These houses and businesses (often contiguous) tend to be owned by Chinese, whose business acumen, contacts and sources of information are notably in advance of those of the indigenous Javanese. A second section of town is the former Dutch district. The houses here are large, spread apart and western in style. They tend to be occupied by a modern, progressive, wealthy and often non-native Solonese group. A third section of Solo, which at least formerly was wealthy, is built in the traditional manner, which means that the only visible part of a wealthy home is its dirty whitewashed wall. If the gate is open, one can see a lawn or court and beyond it a kind of squarish covered porch (*pendopo*) which is the traditional place to sit and to entertain guests. The *pendopo* can be large to the point where in the palaces a couple of tennis courts could be put inside one. These wealthy homes tend to be large, although their age and shifts in the fortunes of their occupants are often apparent. A fourth section of Solo is the traditional areas (*kampung*). The houses are very close together, with only small alleys or lanes giving access to them. They are often built in a scaled-down traditional form. There is not much privacy in a *kampung*, and they are still typified by a certain amount of mutual assistance (*gotong royong*), though this grows less with the advent of modernization. These areas range from middle-class to very poor. In the poorest areas the only toilet is apt to be the ditch along the side of the alley. Around Solo new housing has been built up which is organized on the Western model, with wide access streets and some land around the houses. Usually they are not built

in the traditional Javanese house form but in a more modern style. Another aspect of housing in Solo is that though similar housing tends to cluster together, there are many big, new houses which have been built in the *kampung*s. These are often owned by Chinese.

Solo is officially called Surakarta, and is the administrative center of a province which is also called Surakarta. For clarity, when I use the term Solo I will be referring to the city and will reserve Surakarta for the province. Surakarta comprises an area about the size of Rhode Island. There are six other significant cities in Surakarta: Boyolali, Klaten, Sukoharjo, Wonogiri, Karanganyar, and Sragen. These cities are all smaller and more provincial than Solo but still enter into the same class on the urban continuum. Besides the cities there are hundreds of small towns (*desa*) where traditional farming is practiced. In the Southern part of the province the land is very dry and poor, and life is very hard. In this area corn and cassava are grown. The social structure is simplified by the absence of wealthy land owners. In times long past, this area was a forest, but it was cut; and now during the dry season people must get their water by waiting in lines, which can literally take a week. In Eromoko, for example, they must register and wait for the water and they receive four large vessels a week. To the East, North and West of Solo the land is richer and gets more water. These areas grow a lot of rice and some tobacco. To the west are Mount Merapi and Mount Merbabu and Yogyakarta. To the east is Mount Lawu. These mountains are all volcanoes; and Merapi is still active.

Solo is the commercial as well as the administrative center

of Surakarta. The markets are filled daily with goods from the surrounding *desa*. There is also a fair amount of industry in Solo. Cigarettes, medicinal herb teas, and many other light industries are present in Solo, but by far the biggest industry in Solo is *batik*. *Batik* is a traditional textile-working process which involves using wax to cover areas of the cloth and thus control the parts affected by the dying process. Traditionally the hot wax is applied with an instrument which looks like a pipe but is used like a pen. It is skilled work. This is called *batik tulis*, and it is a long process, requiring some three months from start to finish. The brown dye alone must be applied 26 times, with a day between each dying for it to set, before it attains the proper shade. A more recent development is the use of a *cap*, which is a metal mold for applying the wax. Detailed and fine batik must still be made by hand, but *cap batik* has progressed to the point where to an untrained eye it is indistinguishable from *batik tulis*. In many of the larger houses in Solo an area is set aside for between 10 and 30 workers who produce batik. The workers usually come from the *desa*, and the truly skilled workers are usually old. Batik tulis is an art whose end is in sight. It depends on skilled, cheap labor, which are becoming rare.

A number of social and cultural groups make up the population of Solo. By far the largest is the Javanese. The Javanese can be divided into two classes. One class are members of the traditional aristocracy and they are called *priyayi*. The other class includes everyone else. The *priyayi* generally occupy the large traditional houses, and the families stretch back for generations in that

location. In its narrow, proper, use, the term *priyayi* implies a connection with the court either by blood or by appointment. In a looser usage, however, it can refer to a larger group who have adopted the attitudes and life style of the aristocracy. This group is often involved in the production of batik. Although the power of the courts has faded into memory, the royal families maintain many representatives in the new center of power--Jakarta. This reflects the wealth and education of this class. Formerly their education was often completed in the Netherlands. There are the obvious examples, like the wife of the president who is connected by blood with the Mangkunegaran court (the junior court in Solo), and the former vice-president who is the Sultan of Yogya. However, in the upper echelons of the government, *priyayi* representation is very strong. The non-priyayi Javanese are generally poor and much closer to their farming background. They have often been in Solo only one or two generations and do most of the heavy work. They drive *becak* (a three-wheeled cycle with a place for passengers), they do construction, act as servants, and in general provide the muscle and backbone of this society. A third distinct group is the Chinese, who are generally merchants and can be quite wealthy. The Chinese are set apart socially. Their role as economic middlemen for the Dutch has not been forgotten and their skill at business does not much endear them to the Javanese. The Chinese are in just about every business field. They own and run stores and factories of all kinds as well as the gold market. The Chinese often organize their businesses as familistic concerns. They have adapted to this unstable market by diversifying their holdings and one business may

include a beauty salon, a bakery and an ice cream parlor. The Chinese also have an international outlook. They maintain ties throughout the world, and their business acumen is related to this international information system. There are a number of other smaller groups, including those of Arabic descent, those of Indian descent, and those from other parts of Indonesia who are here as entrepreneurs. However, these groups do not have social or economic power comparable to the Javanese and Chinese. There are obvious remnants of the Dutch presence: many of the older people speak fluent Dutch. Some of the aristocracy are still more fluent in Dutch than in formal Javanese. The deep, underlying effects of Dutch colonialism are demonstrated by the fact that the Dutch legal code has only just now been revised (1980).

The following statistics come from the Government Statistics Office in Solo¹ and were collected in 1978. The population of Solo was 444,221. A break-down by religion showed 308,168 Muslims, 47,756 Catholics, 49,419 non-Catholic Christians, 4,520 Hindus, 2,557 Buddhists, and 31,901 others. The office did not give demographics for the ethnic characteristics of the population; however, the 308,168 Muslims are almost all Javanese with a small group of Arab descent. The Catholics and non-Catholic Christians would include almost all of the Chinese as well as some Javanese.

The statistics on education show 41,495 having graduated from high school, 65,791 from junior high school, 108,079 from grammar school, 80,176 who never attended school, and 87,825 who have not yet started school. The group who have never attended school are probably first generation from the desa. The large proportion of children in the population is also notable.

CHAPTER 4

A JAVANESE PERSPECTIVE

Where are the Western mystics?

It comes as a shock to the Javanese that there is no popular tradition of mystic discipline in the West. Similarly, the role of mysticism in Javanese culture is difficult to understand from a Western perspective. Mysticism in the West (e.g., Hari Krishna, Divine Light Mission, etc.) has marginal integration into the values of the larger culture. In contrast, mysticism in Java is not simply integrated, it is integral. In this chapter, I will briefly give examples of Javanese thought and behavior which reflect this. In the first section, I will discuss the Javanese understanding of history and the role of consciousness in events. I will then give examples of the way in which daily life is considered. Then, I will discuss the popular tradition of mystic discipline and practice. In the following section, I will posit that the body of new information which entered Java in its contact with Western and world culture had an effect on this tradition. The modern mystic groups will be seen as a response to this information and an attempt to synthesize old and new. I will outline the various groups registered in Solo and give a brief description of the history and development of Sumarah.

History and Consciousness

In this chapter, I will attempt to give an indication of the way in which the Javanese traditionally view history and life in general. The Javanese view the world as one physical and spiritual event within which we all play a part. Their emphasis in the contemplation of history is not on chronicling incidents but on the study of the consciousness which underlies and determines the manifest events. Their appreciation of the contacts and linkages which interconnect and unite our species is ultimately unified by viewing the totality of nature and being as one entity which is their concept of the *diety*. Thus, rather than seeing the individual as an isolated psychological entity, the Javanese view the experience of our species as one united event. Below the level of cooperative consciousness, which is our species as a whole, are various unions of consciousness which apparently compete but, in fact, work together on the higher level of the total species. Thus, history reflects the movement and development of consciousness within this global entity. Consciousness is the stuff of our articulation with life. It is what we receive as information, and the accuracy and extent of the reception determines the success of our articulation with our environment. The broader the conscious perspective, the better the fit with the environment and the more reliable the application of information to new problems. Thus, leadership depends on consciousness and the greater the awareness of the leader, the more effective the leadership. This is the basis of the Javanese notion of kingship. The *Susuhunan* (king) of Surakarta and the Sultan of Yogyakarta are traditionally held to be at the head of the Javanese union of

consciousness (Selosoemardjan 1962: 16-23).

Consciousness is connected with wisdom and fore-knowledge. Thus, the greater the consciousness and awareness, the broader the perspective and the more subtle the understanding of an event. When consciousness accepts and is in accord with the totality of being, powers of various kinds are felt to result. An example of the application of this belief occurred in the Javanese reaction to the privations of the Second World War. A well-known set of predictions (Selosoemardjan 1962: 44) were held to be the result of the extraordinarily high and broad consciousness attained by King Jayabaya of Kediri in the twelfth century. Among other things, he forecast the coming of white rules to Java and further predicted that they would eventually be displaced by, "forces coming from the islands of Tembini, the members of which are short-legged and yellow-skinned, and they will occupy Java but only for the lifetime of the maize plant. After their occupation, they will return to the islands of Tembini. Java will return to its former origin and will come back to the children of Java" (Tjantrik Mataram in Selosoemardjan 1962: 44). Selosoemardjan (1962:44) concludes that:

For the Javanese, the Jayabaya predictions constituted a guide to the future of the country; they were also an inexhaustible source of spiritual strength for coping with social problems of the present and future.

Thus, history is viewed as an expression of the totality of nature. For example, when the Second World War is viewed within the total sweep of human history, it takes on a different character from the event when interpreted primarily as a contest between the Axis and the Allies. As Jayabaya is felt to evidence, the cooperative

origin of the war was the cessation of Western colonial dominance. The Javanese paradigm for understanding the role of the individual in war (and in history in general) is found in the Javanese version of the Mahabharata. The Mahabharata is a war epic in which the five brothers of the Pandawa family, which included Arjuna and Bima, fought and eventually defeated the ninety-nine brothers of the Kurawa family; however, the ultimate issue in the contest, as nicely brought out by Anderson (1965), was not the war but the development and maturation of the consciousness of the participants. Development requires opposition, a sparring partner. In the struggle, the two sides polish their characters on each other. To view the conflict in terms of rights and wrongs or good and evil is to miss its point. There are admirable and despicable characters on both sides. History is viewed in the same way. It is a unitary expression and each side in any conflict is necessary to the maturation of the other. It is the combined consciousness of humanity as a unitary event which defines the desires and impulses which are the motivation for our actions as individuals and groups. An individual's personal understanding of his behavior and purposes reflects the level of consciousness that he has attained. But the actions themselves reflect his immersion and loyalty to the total aggregate of the species which is in the essence of his being. Thus, a Hitler is not viewed primarily on the level of his own twisted understanding, but on the broader level of cooperation and self-sacrifice underlying the manifested people and events. A person who is not in accord with the movements and communal demands of consciousness has no power. I asked once about Hitler, and was told that he was performing a duty (*tugas*).

Thus, humanity is likened to one body. The two hands may be rubbed together to warm them but the linkage between the event and its unified intention is likely to be incompletely and differentially understood by the participating "cells" of the two hands. Western domination has caused pain within our united being and the two world wars are viewed as a response to and an expression of that pain.

The appreciation of an event in its natural context allows the lesson connected with it to be learned and releases the pain of protesting the event. This is true of individual and group experience. Pain which is not released, experience which is not confronted and accepted in its natural setting, remains stored in the system. From this perspective, Western society appears dominated by unaccepted, unreleased, unfronted pain which encases our experience and makes our lives empty, restless and unpleasant.

However, explaining a human being's behavior in terms of itself is likened to trying to explain the behavior of an ant as an expression of individuality. An explanation is possible on an individual level but will tend to be a complex compilation of particularistic observations the interpretation of which will necessarily be confused and convoluted in assuming ego-centricity. This applies to groups as well. Depending on the point of view of the observer, every event and everything has multitudinous positive and negative aspects. It is only when something is viewed in its total natural context that its many aspects become one in a balanced perspective. Suwondo, one of the leaders of Sumarah, gave the following evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the East and the West:

Most people from the East are easily pleased, but it is hard for them to progress; but the people of the West are hard to please and they make progress very quickly. What is the reason? When they want to make a study, they are bold, and the knowledge they have available to them is generally more complete. But then, if you have too much knowledge, it can cause problems; but if you have too little knowledge, you can't progress. We must study the connection of knowledge with nature. We must study natural law so that technical progress is accompanied by spiritual progress. If technical progress goes on without it, maybe things will just end with an atom bomb.
(Kerten 6/11/79)

Daily Life

The Javanese value calm (*tentrem*) and polite, respectful attitudes and behavior (*sopan santun*). Conceit or excessive self-regard (*sombong*) is improper and constitutes an emotional and experiential imposition on others. The Javanese hold that emotion is easily communicated, and that it is unpleasant and disturbing to receive strong emotions. The more prolonged and intense the emotion, the more it is an imposition. As a consequence, one is expected to avoid promoting or advertising one's emotional state as much as possible. For example, when a Javanese says that a relative has died and then laughs, the laughter is a courtesy to the listener to protect him from the private personal emotion. Self-indulgent displays of emotion are accepted in children but are considered a sign of immaturity in adults which, if protracted or habitual, can become a source of ill health.

The basic aim of the Javanese in daily life is to "diminish the desires by getting them into perspective" (*meper hawa nepsu*) or to "conform to the real nature of the desires" (*ngruntutaké hawa nepsu*), both of which refer to the same practice. It is believed that the driving force in almost all human behavior is desire, and

that desires can be divided into four classes. All of the desires have a positive and a negative aspect, depending on how they are applied. The first and basest of the desires is *aluamah*. *Aluamah* is expressed in egoism, ambition, and in hunger and other physical cravings. The next desire is *amarah*. *Amarah* is passion and emotion such as anger. The third desire is *supiah*. *Supiah* is wishes, longings and possessiveness, such as the desire for love and sexual desire. The fourth and most refined of the desires is *mutmainah*. *Mutmainah* is purity and the desire to be good. The four desires also have associations with colors, parts of the body, and natural forces as shown in figure 1. The colors associated with the desires are as follows: *aluamah* is black, *amarah* is red, *supiah* is yellow, and *mutmainah* is white. These colors are connected with the "colors of the blood," which seems a theory akin to that of body humors. The colors of the blood are connected with the color the body is said to generate when a person is experiencing a desire. This aura is most often described as originating in the chest area. For example, a person experiencing anger gives off a red glow. The associations with parts of the body are as follows: *aluamah* is associated with the mouth, *amarah* with the ears, *supiah* with the eyes, and *mutmainah* is associated with the breathing or nose. These associations are quite literal in application. For example, *aluamah* is the mouth, and the mouth is connected with the stomach and with hunger and food. *Mutmainah*'s connection with breathing reflects the Javanese appreciation that the process of breathing is the key to regulating and refining the desires. The connection of the desires with natural forces is as follows: *aluamah* is

Figure 1. The Four Desires and Associations

Hawa Nepsu (desire)	Basic nature	Color	Part of body (sense)	"Element"
Aluamah	egoism	black	mouth, stomach	earth
Amarah	passion (anger)	red	ears	fire
Supiah	desire (love)	yellow	eyes	water
Mutmainah	altruism (goodness)	white	nose, lungs	air

associated with earth, *amarah* with fire (for example, the sun), *supiah* with water, and *mutmainah* with air. Thus, the associations go from the base to the ethereal.

These natural associations reflect the appreciation that the purpose of the study of one's nature is not to metamorphose one desire into another but to become more aware of the various fundamental aspects and needs of one's nature. Thus, the purpose of this study is to refine one's relationship with the desires and bring them into balance and unity of purpose. At any given time, it is felt that one of the desires will be most active and lead the rest. A person's character, however, is felt to have a tendency to settle consistently into one of these desires; and this is seen as producing character types. These types are not emphasized, but they respectively correspond to the oral, anal, phallic, and genital personality types of Freudian psychology. What is emphasized is balance. The breadth and depth of a person's awareness is based on the balance and unity of these energies that he has attained. A common image used to depict this is that of a chariot pulled by four horses. The four horses represent the power and energy of *aluamah*, *amarah*, *supiah*, and *mutmainah*, and the charioteer is the ego which has learned to control the desires so that they work together as a team rather than pulling apart. A picture depicting this is to be found in many Javanese homes. In traditional Javanese practice the study of the desires involves meditation and various abstinences and fasts (*tapa*). This study is said to involve an increase in self-awareness and self-criticism, which is termed "looking at the back of your own neck" (*tolehen githokmu déwé*). This is the basis of traditional mysticism.

The Javanese believe in *karma*. There are aphorisms which express this as in: "There is no escape from the consequences of your actions" (*Ora luput saka ngunduhing panggawé*). Reincarnation (*tumimbal lahir*) is also believed in. It is considered a characteristic of the soul or spirit. The emphasis in referring to *karma* is on this life. Any behavior has social, familial, physical, and characterological consequences. The consequences may be expressed quickly, but more characteristically become apparent as the reserve of youth fades. The family is a *karmic* unit. Legend (Moertono 1968: 16) has it that Ki Ageng Sela spent a life of rigorous asceticism so that his descendents would become kings of Java. However, these associations are not limited to fable. For example, a middle-aged aristocrat (*priyayi*) man told of a relative by marriage who had lost a grandson and then two years later a son in accidents. This was an expression of *karma* on the family. He believed that it resulted from the man's involvement in the massacre of communists and Chinese following the attempted coup of 1965.

Another aphorism connected with *karma* holds that one should, "Always sow rice inside" (*Tansah nandur padi jeru*). Rice is the foundation of Javanese civilization (analogous to the fire brought by Prometheus in Greek legend) and is the staple of the Javanese diet. Proper behavior is seen as the "rice" of the character; and proper behavior is seen as giving without ulterior motives. It is felt that good behavior will not necessarily be returned but that bad deeds are sure to be. It is also felt that any behavior has an influence on the character and a tendency to become habit. "A noble character does not depend on wealth, poverty or position but

comes to anyone who is diligent in the practices of a noble character" (*Budi luhur ora gumantung ana wong sugih, mlarat, utawa pangkat, ning sapa wae sing kuwat kanggonan budi luhur*).

The Javanese believe that death must be prepared for and that it should be faced with grace and acceptance. This is termed: "Seeking provisions for death during life" (*Golek sanguning pati sajerning urip*). Death is a study which puts life into a profound and stable perspective. Death is the end of life, but, more importantly, it is an opportunity to rejoin with the source of life which should not be squandered or interfered with. For example, when a Javanese aristocrat (*priyayi*) matron of about 76 years of age became ill, the family divided into two factions. One of the factions was traditional; and when she went into a coma after about a month of illness, she was physically maintained and visited by a doctor but was not hospitalized. According to the traditional view, the most important consideration was her spiritual condition. Thus, she was visited by various traditional medical practitioners (*dukun*) and mystic (*kebatinan*) experts. The consensus was that she was indeed dying and that she was dying quite well; that is, her "journey of death" (*perjalanan*) was under way. The other faction was part of the modern Indonesian elite and they felt that she should have more treatment. They strongly promoted Western medicine. Her son finally accepted this advice and she was fed intravenously. She improved a little but did not recover consciousness. The traditional faction was angry. This was interfering with the smoothness of her entry into death and she could suffer spiritually because of it. One woman remarked that, "They had better not do that to me when

it's time for me to go." After a week, when it was clear that she was slipping again, the intravenous was taken out and she passed away a few days afterwards.

At the other end of the life cycle, raising children (see H. Geertz 1961: 83-118; Mulder 1975: 91-93) is an application of "accompanying [guiding] from behind" (*tut wuri handayani*), which means that it is a parent's role not to mold a child but to let the child find his own path and to gently guide and protect him while he does. The children are not punished or harshly reprimanded when they do something wrong, but rather are gently reminded (*dielingkê*) and asked not to repeat the offense. It is felt that harsh treatment at too early an age will be misunderstood, and that it leaves scars which everyone pays for later on. These scars make a child insensitive, intractable, and often hostile. During the two years we lived in Solo in a *kampung* (neighborhood block) surrounded by children, we never so much as saw a child harshly scolded. For example, these attitudes were applied when a naughty four-year-old was disciplined. The boy had been crying all morning, and none of the gentle procedures tried had persuaded him to stop. Finally, he was carried into the bathroom and the door was closed. Bathing in Indonesia is done by pouring ladlefuls of water over the body. The room is tiled and drained, as this is not done in any special closet or tub. Bathroom walls in Indonesia are often high enough to block vision but not much higher, as in this case. The boy was closed in and then was "reminded" not to cry by having ladlefuls of water tossed over the wall into the bathroom. The boy moved into a corner out of the way and stopped crying. Then he was let out

again and remained subdued for a while.

Javanese manners are designed not to disturb or impose on the experience of others. For example, my wife was waiting at a friend's house for her to come home. She noticed that the house was filling with smoke. She was served tea. Later her friend came home and explained that there had been a fire in the kitchen. Her servants, however, had not wished to disturb her guest, and had quietly gone off to a neighbor to get help in fighting the fire. This attitude of respect and not upsetting people is dominant in Javanese manners. The terms for the emotions connected with this behavior are *pakewuh*, which is a mild kind of embarrassment or discomfort connected with feeling that something one might do would inconvenience someone, and *isin*, which is a stronger shame which is connected with upsetting someone. A great deal of Javanese behavior is founded on this continuum.

Viewed more broadly, the amount of concern and importance given to the experience of others and to not upsetting them is another expression of the dialectic of balance and imbalance seen above in connection with the desires (*hawa napsu*). Extremes are dangerous. This principle is expressed in much common Javanese behavior. For example, in customs of eating, food is not eaten hot, it is eaten lukewarm; and, while tea may be served hot, it is the duty of the host to make sure that it is lukewarm before the guest is invited to drink. Many of the more traditional people will not drink iced drinks. They are too cold. Pregnant women are advised not to accept cold drinks. The fear of excessive cold and of "wind enters" (*masuk angin*) which is a low-grade disorder rather

like a "cold" but symptomatologically more general, is also expressed in the way that infants are sometimes dressed in outfits with knitted ski caps and what appear to be snowsuits. This is also reflected in the outfits often used for riding on motorcycles which again include ski caps and heavy jackets. On buses, trains and other transport this principle is expressed in a strong aversion to open windows. This is based on a fear of *masuk angin* in which the excessive motion of the air is felt to yield imbalance and illness. *Masuk angin* itself is a peculiar phenomenon. While the symptoms which can be attributed to it are manifold, there is often a connection with gross amounts of belching and flatulation as the wind exits and balance is regained during the course of the condition.

Emotional extremes also produce imbalance. Love, hate, excitement, extreme joy, fear and anger are all subject to the law of balance (*hukum seimbang*), according to which departures from a state of calm are considered strains on the system which make illness likely. Since extreme emotions are the source of the imbalance, it is advisable not to get people agitated, both for their good and one's own.

The Javanese believe that proper behavior is wholehearted (*éklaś*) and ties neither the actor nor those involved to any ulterior motives (*pamrih*) or expectations. The ideal is not always met but it is clearly set forth and practiced. The Javanese view bad faith in interaction as a result of immaturity, misunderstanding, or a lack of "awareness of the effects of one's actions on others" (*tepa sliśa*).

Further examples and discussion of many of these values

will be present in the consideration of Sumarah.

Kebatinan

The disciplines traditionally used to study consciousness and power are called *kebatinan*. The word is derived from the root, *batin*, which refers to the inner content of experience as opposed to the outer form of experience (*lahir*). Traditional mysticism was a set of austerities, fasts and disciplines. According to interviews with Harjanto of Buluarti in Solo, the study of these disciplines was usually done in secret and the teacher/student (*guru/murid*) relationship was very important. Different teachers taught different "specialties" which were called "sciences" (*ilmu*). For example, some taught healing, some taught invulnerability, some taught astral travel, some taught the process of purifying a location, some taught foreknowledge of events, and some taught the art of investing objects with spiritual power. There were many other sciences as well as these which were taught by their specialized practitioners.

Mysticism was closely connected with power and rule. Properly, the connection is not one of ambition but of service. The attainment of high consciousness in a leader is connected with the effectiveness of the articulation of his people (see Jay 1963: 38-40 for a rural variation of this pattern). It is felt that a leader and his people constitute one inter-connected entity and mind with the leader as the center or seat of consciousness. Thus, the role of the king is to remain receptive and pure and when this is done, the seat of his people's consciousnesses as individuals is calm and quiet and their lives are enriched by their increased ability to confront its demands accurately and calmly. Their own inner being

is stable and solid. The titles of the four kings of the four houses of the Mataram family reflect this. The king of the senior line, whose court is in Solo, is Pakubuwono which means "He who is the Nail of the World." The king of the second branch of the family in Yogya is Hamengkubuwono which means, "He who holds the World in his Lap." The king of the third house of Mataram, who resides in Surakarta, is Mangkunegara which means, "He who holds the Country in his Lap." And the king in the youngest branch of the family in Yogyakarta is Pakualam which means, "He who is the Nail of Nature." This was how the concept of divine kingship (*dewaraja*) was expressed in Islamic Java.

Thus, the traditional court was the center of the mystic practice and the most powerful mystics of the time gathered at court to teach and to lend their strength to the king. The royal family was trained in a strict form of mystic discipline. One prince told of an uncle who did a fast of not eating or sleeping and wandered through Central Java for forty days in the 1920s. To rest he would lean up against trees. As Geertz observes (1960: 325-326), such rigorous fasting is becoming increasingly rare. However, a man reputedly completed a forty-day fast in the Kediri area of East Java last year.

The traditional fast and abstinence periods are one, three, seven, and forty days. The popular appreciation of the purposes for undertaking a fast were described by K. Adhisaputro of Solo in an interview as follows:

1. Seeking benefit (wealth)
2. Seeking inner peace and harmony in the world
3. Seeking to receive the will of Allah

4. Seeking invulnerability
5. Seeking to increase sensitivity and communicate with spirits

Various forms of fasts and abstinences (*tapa*) are common knowledge in Central Javanese society. The less rigorous forms are still done frequently. Our servant told us that her younger brother, who is about sixteen years old, had completed a *mutih* (eating only unsalted white rice) of seven days with five of his school-mates. Another woman described experiences in her teens when she undertook *ngebleng* (neither eating, sleeping, or speaking) for three days with the approval and supervision of her father. She did the fast in a secluded room and every morning her father would knock at the door and wait for her to cough, telling him that she was all right. One of our neighbors also did a great deal of fasting and particularly recommended *mutih* (rice-fast) for learning self-discipline. Another friend did twenty-four hour *pasa* (not eating or drinking) to help her son pass his university exams. Again according to K. Adhisaputro, the many forms of fasts and abstinences include the following:

	<i>Tapa</i>
<i>melek</i>	staying awake for twenty-four hours or more
<i>pasa</i>	not eating or drinking for twenty-four hours or more
<i>mutih</i>	eating only rice cooked without salt, usually for longer periods
<i>ngrowat</i>	the same as <i>mutih</i> except with pounded cassava
<i>pati geni</i>	eating only uncooked foods (fruits and vegetables)
<i>mbisu</i>	not speaking for twenty-four hours or more
<i>ngebleng</i>	not eating, sleeping, or speaking for twenty-four hours or more
<i>kungkum</i>	sitting immersed in water (especially a river or spring), usually after midnight, meditating

Particular forms of *tapa* are considered especially effective for specific purposes. For example, *mutih* and *ngrowat* are connected with learning self-discipline; *pati geni* is effective for increasing sensitivity and communicating with spirits; *kungkum* is practiced in

seeking invulnerability; and *ngebleng* is connected with seeking to receive Divine Will. However, any of these *tapa* can be used to increase consciousness.

Modern Mystic Practice

The modern mystic groups are an outgrowth of the *kebatinan* tradition. Mysticism is still practiced in the traditional form of secrecy and *tapa* but the modern groups reflect a number of changes.

One of the differences between traditional mystic practice and that of the modern groups is the public nature of modern mysticism. Traditionally, a teacher taught in secret and took on only one or two students. An aspiring student had a very hard time finding and being accepted by a teacher. Mystic practice has now come into the open. While it is true that some of the groups hold their doctrine in "secret," it is given to all members and membership is open to the public. As Geertz (1960: 308, 346) notes, knowledge of even the secret practices is available through members who sample and shift from group to group.

A second difference between the traditional practice and the modern organizations is in size. Some of the modern groups are very small and regional such as PKMG in Solo which is a local organization with only 27 members. However, others are organized nationally on a large scale. *Pangestu*, *Sapta Darma*, and *Subud* all have more than one hundred thousand members and *Subud* even has international chapters. The group focused on in this study, *Samarah*, has about ten thousand members nationally. They come from all classes and virtually all walks of life. There are about 350 nationally registered groups in Indonesia. The registered groups which are present

in Solo according to PAKEM (the government supervisory agency) are presented in figure 2. A great deal of less formal, unregistered mystic practice goes on in Solo as well.

Another difference or refinement of traditional mysticism is the explicit (governmentally supervised) absence of the search for influence and political power in the modern groups. As Suhardo, one of the founding members of Sumarah, put it, "This is a study to help bring peace to the world, not for personal benefit." As Geertz observed (1960: 309-312), there is a core to the practice which is common to all of the groups. This core is belief in *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (the totality of existence which is their divine principle), the development of consciousness, and the rendering of service. Powers (*ilmu*), such as invulnerability, were a part of the practice of many of the older groups during the colonial and revolutionary periods but are not focused on now. Many of the modern groups do emphasize healing and (as in Sumarah) various forms of what might be termed "extra-normal communication" which are used in teaching. However, the various groups focus on different techniques or skills. For example, of the groups in Solo: *Mahayana* and *Panunggalan* teach astral travel (*kasukman*); *Subud*, *Sumarah*, PKMG, *Sapta Dharma*, and *Perjalanan* focus on healing; and *Perswathin* (the local version of Theosophy) and *Papandaya* do philosophical or doctrinal study. All of the groups do some form of meditation.

Many of the modern groups have integrated Western terms and theories into their practice. There is interest (as in Ananda Suyono Hamongdarsono of Sumarah in Solo) in testing the effects of the practice with scientific instruments and the modern mystic societies

Figure 2. Mystic Associations Registered in Solo

group name	date foun- ded	founder	where founded	start number membership in rising/ Solo falling	meeting frequency	emphasis in practice		
I. Sabta Darma	1956	Tukino	Kediri	1958	423	constant	every day	standing meditation with movement and prayers does healing
II. Mahayana	1958	H. Sutarna	Solo	1958	250	constant	every day	astral travel (<i>kasukman</i>) similar to VII
III. Ilmu Sejati	1925	R.S. Prawiro- sudarso	Saradan, Madiun	1958	256	constant	once a month	<i>penget</i> founding prin- ciples practiced
IV. Pangestu	1949	R. Sunarto	Solo	1949	5,788	increasing	every day	relaxed meditation studies book by founder called TRUE LIFE (<i>Sasangka Jati</i>)
V. Sumarah	1950	Sukino	Yogya	1935	200	constant	every day	relaxation meditation, does healing
VI. Perwathin (Theosophy)	?	Annie Besant	inter- national	1963	110	constant	every day	study theosophical doctrine
VII. Panunggalan	1963	W. Atmo- pandoyo	Solo	1963	50	constant	once a week	similar to II
VIII. PKMG	1960	Darso- wijoyo	Solo	1960	27	constant	twice a week	meditation and healing, similar to I, V, X

Figure 2--Continued

group name	date founded	founder	where founded	start number membership			meeting frequency	emphasis in practice
				in Solo	in group	rising/ falling		
IX. Perjalan	1955	Mei Kartosasmito	Jakarta	?	221	falling slightly	no scheduled meetings	meditation and healing
X. Subud	1932	Subuh	Semarang	1964	110	constant	three times a week	meditation with move- ment, glossalalia, healing
XI. Perhimpunan Peri Kemanusiaan	?	Sudiro	Cilanda Besar	1963	118	constant	once a month	quiet meditation, similar to V
XII. Papandaya	1950	Handaya- ningrat	Solo	1950	95	constant	once a week	similar to VI but not connected with Theosophy
XIII. Paguyuban Mulat Salira Hangesti Tunggal	1975	Supiarto	Solo	1975	220	constant	once a week	meditation, similar to XI, XIV
XIV. Wiweka	1975	Subroto	Solo	1975	225	constant	once a week	meditation with speech from the "essence" Subroto does healing
XV. Paguyuban Kuluwargo Kepribatin	1979	Angoro	Solo	1979	101	constant	once a month	similar to XIV but voice comes from "deeper self" rather than "essence"

can be viewed as an attempt to assimilate and respond to the new information which has entered Java from international contacts in this century. This is one of the themes of Stange's (1980) work on Sumarah history. The following is a brief account of the history of Sumarah.

Sumarah

Sumarah was founded in 1935 as a result of a series of revelations received by Sukinohartono (Pak Kino) who was a member of the lower bureaucracy in Yogyakarta. In the beginning, a small, informal group was founded and within a couple of years it had spread to Solo. The principles of the practice were set down in the "Aims of Sumarah" (*Sasanggeman*) which was written by the three leaders of the early phase of the organization, Sukino, Suhardo, and Sutadi. It was signed on April 22, 1940. The following is Sumarah's own English translation:

Sasanggeman - The Aims of Sumarah

(An association dedicated to material and spiritual peace through total surrender to God in meditation).

1. The members of "Paguyuban Sumarah" are certain of the existence of God, Creator of the Cosmos, and acknowledge the Prophets and the Holy Books.
2. They work to be constantly aware of God, by avoiding egoism and arrogance, and by believing in the ultimate truth, through self-surrender to God.
3. They strive toward bodily health, peaceful hearts, and clean spirits, and to refine their character both in words and deeds.
4. They work to strengthen the brotherhood of man through love and compassion.
5. They aim to work toward universal and spiritual harmony, by accepting the responsibilities of daily life, by responding to the needs of society as a whole, and by fulfilling their duty as citizens.

6. They vow to do right, submit to the laws of the country, and respect other human beings; not to defame the beliefs of others, but rather to act on the basis of love, so that all spiritual and religious groups develop toward the same aim.
7. They vow to avoid evil actions, hurting, hating, sinning etc.; all speech and actions are to be unpretentious and true, and to be performed perfectly and accurately, without haste or strain.
8. They vow to develop diligently in both spiritual and worldly spheres.
9. They vow not to be fanatical, but to rely on truth, which in the end benefits all people.

Yogyakarta and Surakarta, 12 Mulud Dhal 1871
(April 22, 1940).

Sukino, Suharda, Sutadi.

Many of the early members of Sumarah had long been involved in mystic practice. The first to join with Sukino was another member of the lower Yogyanese aristocracy whose name was Suhardo. The third of the three leaders who guided Sumarah through its early years was of the Solonese aristocracy and his name was Sutadi. His entry into Sumarah marked the start of the Solo group in 1937. The three leaders (*Penisepuh*), each took organizational positions: Sukino was the spiritual head of Sumarah; Suhardo was the teacher and head of education who carried the practice to many cities in East and Central Java; and Sutadi was the organizational head who was responsible for coordination. However, the organization was very fraternal and informal in the early period.

Stange (1980: Appendix D) divides Sumarah history into a number of organizational periods and spiritual phases. This account will be a simplification of his more detailed treatment. The first phase in Sumarah's history (1935-1950) was centered on the three founders. It was a practice of meditation with movement and included

a form of training in the Javanese martial arts (*pencat silat*) and invulnerability (*kekabalan*). These were the years of the struggle for independence. The practice focused on the development of "resolve" (*tekad*) and the quieting of thought.

The second phase went from 1950 to 1966. In 1950 the leadership shifted to Surono and the organization and the group became more formal. Teachings were published and new terms began to enter from modern medicine and science. A great deal of stress was placed on ranks or levels of consciousness (Geertz 1960: 343-344). During the first period the practice had been divided into two groups. The young members (*kanoman*) focused on the physical and martial side of the practice and the older members (*kesepuhan*) stressed the development of consciousness through meditation. In the second phase, the group was divided into seven ranks which met separately. During this phase, the emphasis of the practice shifted from the development of "resolve" (*tekad*) to the development of "faith" (*iman*). Movement was de-emphasized in the meditation and the meetings were periods of calm, quiet meditation.

The third phase (1966-present) has been led by Arimurthy. The organization of the group went from the tight centrality of Surono's period to the regional semi-autonomy practiced at present. The teachings of the group also became less structured and more freedom was given to individual leaders to develop whatever form of instruction matched their regional situation. However, there are yearly conferences in Yogyakarta wherein viewpoints are exchanged. Initiations and ranks were de-emphasized and the seven separate levels were reduced to two. Nowadays, there are regular meetings which are

open to the public, and organizational and leader-training meetings which are by invitation. The terms and theory used by various leaders have become more modern and diverse, reflecting the leaders' backgrounds and ages. The focus of the practice gradually shifted from "faith" (*iman*) to "surrender" (*sumarah*). The Sumarah leadership has emphasized its role in an organization (SKK) of almost one hundred mystic societies which hold occasional conferences devoted to the development of consciousness in society.

PART III

BASIC SUMARAH THEORY AND PRACTICE

In this Part, I will present the basic elements of Sumarah theory and practice and illustrate them in cases from a meeting. In Chapter 5, I will present the fundamental level of Sumarah theory which roughly corresponds to what is termed personality theory in Western psychology. In Chapter 6, I will describe the basic elements of the practice and illustrate it with meditations led by two of the Solo leaders. In Chapter 7, I will present two cases from a meeting to show how the theory and attitudes of the practice are applied.

Sumarah is an applied study and there are many similarities to psychotherapy at this level of the practice; however, there is a difference in outlook. The primary unit of consideration is not the individual, as in psychotherapy, but the social group. Suwondo, one of the leaders, expressed this as follows:

We study here in order to seek happiness together, not for our own happiness. Because when you pursue your own happiness, whether you are aware of it or not, you will sometimes bring misfortune to others in order to make yourself happy. This is what we try to avoid doing. (Kerten 3/10/80)

CHAPTER 5

THEORY

Sumarah and Javanese mystic psychology in general are based on a notion of being and reality which is termed *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* or *Gusti Allah*. These terms refer to a concept of the divine and can be respectively translated as "God Who Is All in One" and "Lord God." However, the translation of these terms as "God" is felt to be potentially misleading by members of the group who can speak English. The concept, as it is used in Sumarah, is neither transcendent nor immanent, but total; it is all that is.

You cannot be outside the power of Tuhan. Whether you study Sumarah or not, whether you are aware of it or not, you cannot do, feel or think anything which is not contained in the laws and will of Tuhan. (Kerten 3/10/80)

I will translate this term as "nature," "reality," "being," or "Tuhan" depending on its use in a particular passage.

Within the mystic practice, this understanding is felt to be an important tool for releasing the control on which the separation and self-importance of ego is based. This separation is felt to be delusional--a continual struggle against reality maintained at the expense of great parts of experience which are occluded by the ego processes. The acceptance of one's own direct experience as a goal or intention is depicted as the first step in receiving reality as it is, the undifferentiated and all-embracing experience of being which is termed the acceptance of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. This

direct open relationship with being is felt to be the source of life and health and is characterized by a relaxed acceptance of one's present state and a willingness to perform its demands. Thus, the power and knowledge associated with mysticism is seen as coming in surrender and service to reality in its fullest and yet most intimate sense.

In Sumarah, as in all other Javanese mystic groups, heavy emphasis is placed on "service" (*leladi*). The leaders are not recompensed in any material way for their time or efforts. There is status involved in the leadership positions, but it is felt that deriving emotional gratification from the status is a fault--a flaw in character which must be corrected before the service can take on its intended objective. This objective is that the service be rendered clearly and cleanly to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. As is stated in the following, this is the only type of service which is consistent with the nature of reality, and any other motives or qualifications which enter into it sully the service and turn it into an expression of the ego.

In time, when you are able to surrender, you will know that when you ask for things, that's not proper. When you ask Tuhan for things it's wrong. . . . It's not service to Tuhan. In fact, what is asked for is service. In time this becomes clear, although it's not accepted at first; eventually it becomes clear that that's the way it is. (Grogol 6/1/79: 207)

It is felt that there are many ways of acting and many attitudes to take during behavior, but that most of them are wrong. It is felt that the constraints involved in seeking a proper mode of behavior are formidable. However, attaining a way of life which is consistent with the nature of reality is not a formalistic problem. It is felt that the best guide to assessing responses is not some code

of behavior but an open awareness of the present situation and honesty about one's deficiencies and weaknesses.

While Tuhan Yang Maha Esa can be translated as "nature," "reality," or "being," Tuhan is not considered a passive principle but one which is inextricably active in all that is. Tuhan Yang Maha Esa is depicted as "all powerful" (*Maha Kuasa*), "all just" (*Maha Adil*), and "all knowing" (*Maha Tahu*). The personal relationship with Tuhan is expressed in the following:

I am a human being; and any human being is limited, with lots of weaknesses. I hope that Tuhan will remind me of this. When I am wrong or irresponsible, I pray that Tuhan remind me of it or hit me on the head until I see it. That's the responsibility. The ego must take responsibility for itself in order to be evaluated by Tuhan. Even so, in reality we can't always do that. We feel that we are accepting responsibility, but in fact we aren't. So when we request something of Tuhan, we may request it but don't forget Tuhan's will concerning the matter. We should ask that Tuhan make us aware of it because we cannot possibly know His will; we can only know what is customary, but Tuhan's will has nothing to do with our customs. (Keratonan 2/21/80)

Tuhan Yang Maha Esa is considered all-conscious and all-knowing, and the purpose of the meditation is to find and join with (surrender to) that consciousness. Once surrender (*sumarah*) has been attained, it is felt to constitute an active relationship. The awareness of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa is said to come not from the meditator but from reality itself: "It is not we who are aware of Tuhan, but Tuhan who is aware of us" (*Dudu aku sing eling pada Allah, ning Allah sing eling pada aku*). This awareness is also seen to be an active support and protection which is termed "awareness within protective shelter" (*eling dalem pangayoman*).

Prayer is a part of this practice; however, it is felt that prayer offered for some personal gain or purpose is improper. The

broader the perspective and the more altruistic the purpose, the better. For example, a supplication for family is better than one for self, and so on with community, country, species, etc. Thus, the larger the aggregate of beings included in the request, the better; however, the only fully proper attitude during a supplication is "What is Thy will?" (*Panjenengan kersa menapa?*) or "What must I do?" (*Kathahipun kula kados pundi?*). This is the attitude of surrender (*sumarah*) and it is considered the only attitude which does not separate one from reality and isolate one within the ego.

Rasa

The fundamental element in Javanese psychology is *rasa*, and it is probably the most difficult concept in the Javanese language. The following will necessarily be a simplification and schematization of this rich term based on its use in *Sumarah*.

Rasa is the experiential context of human life. It stretches from directness and neutrality to the most rabid emotional states and from the most pleasurable to the most painful of conditions. According to *Sumarah*, this global set of responses to reality is divided into two distinguishable types of response--the direct or primary response and the ego system of response. The direct or primary response is considered the interface or awareness between personal experience and reality, between Man and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, and it is termed *rasa murni*. The closest Western parallels to this concept are the *dasein* and *epoche* of existential psychology and phenomenology. *Rasa murni* is considered the broadest awareness potential in Man. It is the direct, totally immediate, egoless reception of both internal

and external reality in its pristine, uncensored condition. The appreciation is that this is the original, infant condition of every human being and that it is our true relationship with reality.

Rasa murni is before thought and before all ego processes and the separation that they necessarily entail. This relationship is described in the following aphorism, "When I am here, Tuhan is not; when Tuhan is here, I am not" (*Yen aku ana, Allah ora ana; yen Allah ana, aku ora ana*). The relationship between rasa murni and ego is expressed in the following:

Wondo (the leader of the meeting): When you have relaxed your body, the feeling of the body is pleasant. But don't stop with that pleasant feeling, go deeper to the calm, neutral feeling which is there. This feeling is neutral; if it is pleasant, it is the feeling of the body, but if it is neutral it is the feeling of feeling. . . .

Santoso (another member): That is empty and calm.

Wondo: It depends on where rasa murni is at that time.

Santoso: How about a feeling of purity; is that still just an emotion?

Wondo: It's just an emotion, and, in fact, if your feeling is not pure, that's all right too. So the purity of the feeling is not what's important; what's important is open reception.

Santoso: Rasa murni is just open reception. (Grogol 6/1/79: 218)

Rasa murni is the "feeling of feeling" and as such does not constitute any particular affective response. In Bateson's terms this is a meta-level distinction (1972: 279-308). Rasa murni tends to be neutral in aspect, but, since it is open reception, it responds to whatever arises. Rasa murni is the paradigm of Javanese psychology, and its attainment is one of the purposes of groups like Sumarah.

The relationship between rasa murni and ego can be depicted as follows. Rasa murni is the direct, immediate reaction of the total being and thus can involve no ego. It is simple response to stimulæ from both internal and external reality. By definition,

ego is separated from this direct response but the direct response is always there. The control exercised by ego is a product of selection of perception from this direct response, and this selection process takes time. Thus ego states are on a kind of continuum of increasing temporal separation and narrowing perceptual reception of the stimulæ of *rasa murni*. This continuum begins in the subtle and accepting feeling states (also called *rasa*) which are close to *rasa murni* in both time and tone. The continuum carries on through cruder forms of *rasa* involving more censoring, rigid selection and temporal separation. It continues on into the sharper, more situation-specific, and, if protracted, necessarily more occlusive and temporally removed emotions (*emosi* or *rasa bungah-susah*). Finally, the continuum terminates in the pathological expressions of ego which are found in the non-functional hyperselectivity and temporal isolation of some forms of psychic disorder.

Thus, it is felt that the more intense and the more prolonged an affective response, the more perceptual selection and censoring is involved in maintaining it and the more tension it fosters. The actual perceptions received are selected from the open response of *rasa murni* and the antagonism between the real situation and the constructed one is a continual source of tension. The tone of the affective state, whether it be positive or negative, is not considered material to this process. The critical factor is the intensity of the response as is discussed in the following:

Questioner: So hate and disappointment enter into one class.
 Wondo: Oh yes. Love is like that too. Yes, the same class.
 It's just the same. When you're in love you can't sleep and you're apt to get deranged. When you hate someone you're apt to get deranged too. It's the same thing. (Kerten 6/4/79)

Spontaneous responses, responses too strong and quick to be contained, are considered an occasional inevitability. However, an often repeated dictum in this practice is that: "the most important thing in applying this practice in daily life is not to be under the influence of emotion." This distinction between spontaneous and hence inescapable behavior and planned, contemplated response is discussed in the following consideration of vengeance:

Is the vengeance coming from the reality or is it based on your own version of it? That's different. If I plan revenge then I am the one who is wrong and it comes back to me. But if I respond with vengeance because I don't have enough self-control, it just comes out spontaneously. (Grogol 6/1/79: 230)

Another related aspect of this practice is that experience should be received and confronted as directly and honestly as possible. The problem with unfaced experiences (i.e., experience from which some part has been excluded by choosing to react according to some opinion or version of reality) is that these experiences are stored away until they are released by being appreciated in their real context. It is felt that there is only one true reaction to any situation which is the one founded in *rasa murni*. Thus, experience which is unfaced remains as a source of tension when it is stored. Situations which touch on this repressed material excite it and provide another opportunity to feel the tone and the tension related to this material. Unreleased material which is intense and frequently excited is felt to be a potential source of illness. For example, the following was given as an illustration of the connection between ego, emotion and illness in a man with a nervous disorder which was felt to be connected with his hate for his father.

As a matter of fact, I like tennis and because of that I unconsciously forced my body to serve my pleasure to the

point where even though my body was exhausted, I made it continue and I got sick. This body is a tool and I continued with my hobby unaware that I was forcing this tool to go on until it got sick. In fact, it's the same thing. Take a look at it. Your intention is to hate your father and you forced your psyche to work like crazy to go along with your hate to the point where your nerves just gave out. (Kerten 6/4/79)

Another example of the pathological conditions to be found at the emotional end of the rasa continuum is senility. Senility is felt to be a kind of slavery to the stored and unfaced material wherein the ego is overwhelmed by the power of the tension daily life generates in this stored material.

At the other end of the rasa continuum, in the more neutral states of rasa approaching rasa murni, the control decreases and finally, at rasa murni, drops out altogether. It is felt that as the affective state becomes more neutral and accepting of reality, stimulæ which were formerly occluded or drowned out by ego processes become apparent. These new perceptions may arise out of the unconscious or they may come in from outside.

We meditate to sensitize the rasa so that it will be sensitive and receive. Sometimes what we receive disturbs us, but that's all right. So you feel a contact with you don't know what, and it disturbs you. But later when you're used to it, it's no problem. (Grogol 6/1/79: 221)

According to the Javanese view, a human being has many contacts with reality which are not much considered in Western theory. For example, while by no means commonplace, astral travel (*ngraga sukma*) is considered a human potential just about universally and is claimed as an experience by many. Some of the mystic groups specialize in astral travel. The following experience came out in a Sumarah meeting, and the leader's reaction to it is indicative of the Sumarah attitude.

Sukandar: I was lying down to sleep but I wanted to meditate first. It was already late. The TV had signed off after the

badminton match. It was already one o'clock when I got into bed and meditated before going to sleep. Then I envisioned an offering in the center of a three-way intersection. I was being awaited. They were waiting for me to invite me to meditate. Then in the meditation I found myself slipping backwards. But then I realized it with a kind of vibration, then this vibration got more subtle and then stopped and I went out, like flying above everything, over the river and all. But where did I go? I can still remember everything. But then suddenly I remembered Pak Wondo--oops, Pak Wondo--so I remembered your telling me the other day that this sort of thing is not good. I had to return to Solo, so I came back.

Wondo: What did you find out? I sort of learned something when I did that, did you?

Sukandar: How do you make sure you don't take off like that?

Wondo: Well, you've already experienced it, so if you just don't intend it in the future it would be best. . . . Just don't strive for that; but even if it does happen, it's no big deal. It's no big deal. (Grogol 6/1/79: 214-15)

Sumarah tends to focus on the process underlying such experiences and views the experiences themselves rather as it views emotion--a part of reality to be accepted and received accurately when present but not to be indulged in or distracted by. This processual view is stated as follows:

In meditation like this we make use of or receive the waves of nature. Thus, we can receive the waves of nature and we can cause waves to vibrate in nature around us. Nature also records waves. But, on the other hand, we can also record or receive the recordings of nature. It depends on our sensitivity towards the vibrations. What I mean when I refer to *rasa* is how sensitive our *rasa* is. We can receive the waves of nature with our *rasa* and we can also cause waves to vibrate outside ourselves. (Grogol 6/1/79: 217)

Thought

This tight relational view of reality applies to thought (*pikiran*) as well. The nature of thought in Javanese psychology can also be described using the *rasa* continuum. There are three basic types of thought found along the continuum: first, *angen-angen*, which is close to *rasa murni*; second, that which is characteristic of the

cruder forms of rasa and of emotion; third, that which is found in extreme emotion and in certain forms of psychopathology.

Angen-angen, which is thought at the rasa murni end of the rasa continuum, is constrained by rasa murni and reality itself. Thought which is consistent with or leads toward rasa murni is sought. This implies that the thought be open, non-dogmatic, and flexible; that is, it is properly based on the reception of the present situation in the fullest form possible and not on some code or limited goal. Thus, though thought is felt to be constrained in its relationship with the criterion of rasa murni, it is flexible and spontaneous in its response to particular situations. For example, telling the truth is generally considered to be proper but there are situations wherein it is a crude and unnecessary response. It is felt that while an honest and perfectly open relationship must be maintained with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, there are aspects of the personal experience which it is not appropriate to divulge in some contexts.

Beyond the belief that thought should have its inspiration in, and be expressed while remaining in an open, rasa murni relationship with reality, a more subtle aspect is felt to be potential in this area of experience. This is considered the realm of the true teacher (*guru sejati*, *pamong pribadi*, or *Dewaruci*). The true teacher is the active principle experienced in the aphorism: "When I approach Tuhan, Tuhan approaches me" (*Yen aku nyedaki Tuhan, Tuhan nyedaki aku*). This is felt to be the intimate, personal aspect of Tuhan and constitutes the first reflection of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa in our being. When the true teacher is experienced directly, it is described as being a blue light deep within consciousness. Once one is clean

enough to be aware of it, the true teacher becomes the primary and highest instructor in the ways of being. The story of *Dewaruci* presents this concept clearly. The story (*lakon*) of *Dewaruci* is a Javanese addition to the Hindu Mahabharata epic which is performed in *wayang kulit*. *Wayang kulit* is a dramatization of stories from the Mahabharata and sometimes the Ramayana, with some Javanese additions and refinements. The stories are acted out using leather figures which cast a shadow on a screen. The performer (*dalang*) provides the figures with voice and movement. The performances last all night, ending just before dawn. The story of *Dewaruci* is considered the most mystical story (*lakon*), and it depicts *Bima*, one of the good and powerful *Pandawa* brothers, searching for the waters which are the source of eternal life (*tirta marta*). There are a number of incidents in the *lakon*; however, Stange (1977: 121) describes the encounter with *Dewaruci* as follows:

Bima continued without resistance into the depths of the sea. As he progressed the waters became calm and peaceful, the life around him tranquil and harmonious. At the bottom of the ocean he encountered a dwarf. Not recognizing the thumb-sized being as a miniature of himself, Bima addressed him scornfully. Once the dwarf, named Dewaruci, started blithely telling Bima all about himself, Bima quickly realized that he was dealing with a god rather than an ordinary being, so he asked for help in his search for the water of eternal life. Dewaruci responded by telling Bima to enter his left ear. Although balking momentarily, Bima did after Dewaruci assured him that the whole cosmos lay inside--so Bima should have little trouble fitting. Having entered, Bima was disoriented at first, he lost all sense of direction and the space seemed totally empty. Gradually everything returned to view, although in a somewhat different light. Finally Dewaruci himself reappeared and launched into a long explication of esoteric doctrine--including the revelation that the water of life is everywhere, suffusing all being.

The thought characteristic of the *rasa* continuum close to *rasa murni* is considered to be directly inspired and constrained by

rasa. In the second section of the rasa continuum typified by cruder rasa and emotion, thought is coupled with affect in creating, maintaining, and revising versions of reality. This is the realm of the ego, and in this section thought is most often described as a bad habit. Excessive thinking is the single problem most cited in Sumarah meetings. The following is typical of meditation instructions:

Beginning from the outside, relax your body, relax it fully. From your head to your feet--relax. Lessen your activity. Generally the thinking is what's difficult. Reduce your thought activity. Thought is the hardest activity to reduce and especially to stop. It's very difficult. The theory is easy--just don't think about anything--but the practice is hard. That's because it has become a habit to always have some thinking going on. (Grogol 6/1/79: 216-17)

Thought is depicted as one of the tools used by ego to control what it sees and feels in part by simply keeping itself busy. However, in comparison with the first section of the rasa continuum, thought is felt to be both less constrained and less flexible in this section. It is less constrained in that it is apt to neither recognize nor relate to any reality outside the one it creates itself and thus has more power in what it chooses to include and exclude from this private version. It is less flexible in that this created reality necessarily involves this process of inclusion and occlusion and hence the real situation is less completely received and less accurately responded to. The most typical strategy employed in this region is hedonism (*golek penak*); that is, to seek and hold onto pleasurable experiences and to avoid and block out unpleasant experiences. The mechanism of this strategy is that unpleasant experiences are apt to be perceptually de-emphasized or escaped from as they happen and that pleasurable experiences are perceptually overemphasized and indulged in as they occur. This means that these experiences are not received in

their real context and that they are stored in a distorted, unreleased form--that is, without having been given enough direct or honest attention to be seen in perspective--without having been faced.

Broadly outlined, this unfaced material is seen as having a thought component which is opinion based on the incomplete experience lived through and a feeling component wherein the complete experience itself is stored. This material can be accessed through either component. When thought recollects or relives an experience, it selectively excites the stored feeling component. A common and dramatic example of this is when one thinks about something and becomes angry. The anger can be created irrespective of context and then this constructed emotion can be used to fuel thought and behavior. In the following example a teacher and housewife is counseled not to continuously mull over tense situations, but the principle applies to pleasant experiences as well.

When you get frightened like this, it's your own imagination, isn't it? In the past you were like that, but now, over time, it has gotten less. Don't keep going over and over things. It limits your ability to progress. (Grogol 6/1/79: 213-14)

When stored experience is paralleled in the current situation, the feeling component of the stored material is activated and the thought aspect is likely to "play again." A common example of this sort is found in sudden anger. The anger itself can generate thought, words and behavior based on the attitudes and predisposition of the ego, but the ego itself has very little active participation in the response. This tandem relationship is felt to be particularly strong and subtle in sexual contacts, as is described in the following:

One of the things which causes one to be unclean is lack of sex. It's really kind of . . . pardon the expression, I myself, my sex drive is still strong, so when I approach a woman whose--

how do you say it--whose sex drive is strong, I receive the vibrations. That means that I am unclean if I am influenced by the sexual vibrations. That's what's dangerous. Later if you are not strong it can influence the purity of your feeling. It can become an emotion and then although you haven't done anything, your feeling is twisted. External laws may not have been violated but the laws of rasa have been. . . . [So you should] be neutral. Then there is a change in your tools. So later, it changes itself and your reaction itself changes. Then you look at the beauty of a woman and you see her beauty but you aren't influenced by it. It's like looking at a landscape. When you look at beautiful scenery, it's beautiful but it doesn't influence you or attract you. Yes, it's truly beautiful but it doesn't cause you to start imagining things like being in love does. (Grogol 6/1/79: 203-204)

In essence, thought in this section habitually draws on past experiences and the current experience in deriving and maintaining an ego perspective. The maintenance of this perspective is a demanding business and it often makes thought very active and sometimes compulsive in this experience marshalling and managing capacity.

In the third section of the rasa continuum wherein extreme emotion and certain forms of psychopathology are found, as in the cases of extreme hate and senility described above, thought is enslaved to a narrow, emotional view of reality. In this area the apparent freedom of ego in the second section evaporates and the relationship between unfaced material and thought is felt to come out more clearly. In some cases this enslavement is more or less volitional and can be reversed as in the man's hate for his father. In others it has become physiological or at least no longer subject to reversal, as in the case of senility. The options in the case of voluntary states of this kind were presented as follows:

For example, if I hate Mr. A, grrr, I hate him a lot. So this comes out and I express it but then it is gone. But then if I see him again, the same thing happens again. So I promise myself that I will not hate Mr. A because that's just the way Mr. A is. If I hate Mr. A and Mr. A doesn't change his attitudes, who is it that suffers? (Kerten 6/4/79)

Figure 3. The Rasa and Thought Continua

Going down on the graphs indicates greater perceptual selection, temporal separation, and less accurate reception of reality.

The Rasa (total response) Continuum

rasa murni (direct response and reception of reality)
 rasa (feeling)
 emotion
 extreme emotion

The Thought Continuum

angen-angen (contemplation, thought which is close to rasa murni)
 pikiran (thought)
 compulsive thought

Graphic approximation of the relationship between the Rasa and Thought continua

RASA (total response)	THOUGHT
rasa murni (direct response to reality, no thought)	
rasa (feeling)	angen-angen (contemplation, thought which is close to rasa murni)
emotion	pikiran (thought)
extreme emotion	compulsive thought

Involuntary instances of this sort of condition such as those which result from senility are seen as excellent advertisements or incentives for the study of this practice so that this material can come out while one is still conscious and able to learn the lessons of one's experience.

Ego

Like thought and rasa, ego is seen as having different aspects, depending on its use. In the case of ego (*aku* which is Javanese for "I" is generally used, though "ego" itself is sometimes used as well) there are two distinguishable states which again relate to the rasa continuum. Ego can be open to and aimed towards the acceptance of reality. The intention itself is seen as a link with reality and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, and as a first step in this practice. Ego can also be self-absorbed and dedicated to its own version of reality and its own pleasure. This aspect is seen as necessarily entailing separation and antagonism with reality which again can range from the subtle to the psychopathic. Ego is considered a "tool" (*alat*); and, along with the other tools which it coordinates such as thought, feeling, and the physical body, it is felt to have only one true relationship with reality which is based on *rasa murni*. In the case of ego, attaining this relationship implies its own suspension. The incontrovertible and quintessential nature found in this direct relationship is always active, even if not realized; and departure from *rasa murni* is seen as a sure source of tension and conflict as is discussed in the following:

When it's like that the ego gets separated from the other tools; it can't be active because it has no support from the other

tools. . . . So the main thing is the ego, how is the ego first of all. What is to be corrected is the ego. The ego can go in a positive or a negative direction. It's like that. You have to know the rules. The ego shouldn't just manipulate the other tools but should be united together with them and aimed towards the goal. Then later you can find out about the rules of living because we study the art of living so that life can be faced. The ego for the most part is still wild; it doesn't know about the way of life. (Grogol 6/1/79: 202)

The problem with an egocentric or hedonistic life strategy is felt to be that many of life's experiences are not pleasant and thus by hedonistic criteria are to be blocked out or avoided. However, these unpleasant experiences, like any experience, offer a lesson and an opportunity to mature. If these experiences are denied and blocked out, this lesson is lost. One of the lessons to be learned from unpleasant experiences is called *tepa slira*. *Tepa slira* is a concept akin to the Golden Rule. However, *tepa slira* goes a step further and focuses on real affects rather than intentions. It involves an understanding of the affects of actions on self and others and is stated as, "Try it on yourself first" (*Tepakna awakmu déwé*, literally, "Measure it on your own body first"). Thus an unpleasant situation has the benefit of increasing one's *tepa slira* by making it possible to understand better the reactions of others in such situations as in the following:

A bitter experience, one that's not at all pleasant, can change your attitudes. It kind of gives you training. When you belittle something and then someone complains about it, you think, "Well really, why are you making such a fuss." But if it is your own body like when your breathing is like that, it causes *tepa slira* to arise. Sometimes it's like that. Sometimes bad experiences for the feeling in your body are good for your psyche, for the character of the ego. Generally we believe that if the ego likes something it's good for us but it isn't a sure thing. Sometimes we don't like something although it is good for us. (Grogol 6/1/79: 214)

Perception

Sumarah emphasizes the broadening of perceptual and experiential perspective. It is felt that taking a broader view is more balanced and literally more healthy than focusing. As described above, this applies to the ego's intention and approaching one's being in its total context; but it carries with all the tools such as thought, emotion, ego, and the perceptual functions of the body. Vision and hearing provide examples of this. It is felt that one should not look but see, and that one should not listen but hear. This distinction is seen as an increase in receptivity accompanying a decrease in selection of perception. It is felt that concentrated activities such as looking and listening are directly connected with ego, and that the selection this involves necessarily induces tension, fatigue, a loss of real perspective, and illness over the long term. Thus, what is advocated is a return to the relaxed, natural use of these tools which is characteristic of children and this implies a reduction of ego involvement and selection. In the following, the broadening of visual attention is discussed:

You don't understand your eyes. They should be like this [arms spread wide in front of eyes], not like this [finger held up directly in front of face, eyes squinting and forehead tensed in concentration looking at the finger]. Try it. You are always focused on one point. Focus your attention on a broad frame. Eventually you learn to have your attention not right in front, but spread out. It's relaxing. (Grogol 6/1/79: 208)

The physical mechanism connected with this process relates to the body as being roughly divided into two sets of responses. The ego responses are located in the front, e.g., the forebrain, the eyes, the chest, the abdomen, the genitals, etc. When attention is found right in front, it is felt that these powerful sources of perception

and emotion can swallow consciousness altogether, thus limiting perspective to the particular area most active at that time. The areas where attention can be placed for a broader perspective are located in the back part of the body, e.g., the back part of the brain and the back itself. It is felt that when the center of attention is placed in the back, one's activities will be less forced, less emotionally consumed and compelled, and more relaxed. For example, the following is a discussion of study and concentration:

Learn to be balanced. Don't just use your forebrain; use this too [indicates back of the head] and then your notes will be clearer and you will be able to read for a long time without getting tired. Just try it. . . . If you use heavy concentration you tire easily, and when you're tired it affects your powers of memory so that you can't recall what you've studied. . . . While you are studying you think you understand but in a short time you forget. (Grogol 6/1/79: 205)

Thus, the whole body is considered a source of energy and this energy comes from the organs and senses (tools) in various amounts. When ego piles energy and attention into some tool it overloads the energy-handling capacity of that organ or sense and produces tension. This tension is fatiguing in the short term and pathogenic in the long term (e.g., ulcers). The areas of the body which are ignored when the ego directs energy in this fashion also suffer. They are apt to lack the attention necessary for proper maintenance and the energy for repair when it is needed. Pain is felt to be a call for energy and attention. When it is within the ego's capacity and endurance, direct attention to the source of the pain is advocated. The general orientation toward the body is expressed in the following:

Your attention should be spread throughout your whole body. You should be aware of your whole body in order to locate the places where there is tension. You should feel your whole body, or at least as much of it as you can make yourself aware of;

not just a part, but all of it. When you can observe very widely, this in itself will affect the health of your body. When you relax frequently, your body will become more healthy. (Grogol 6/1/79: 207)

The ultimate source of the energy of life is not considered to be the physical mechanism of the body but rather Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, the totality of one's relationship with reality itself. This energy is felt to be clearly expressed in each beat of the heart, and the purpose of the study of Sumarah is to bring all of one's experience into accord with the will of being in this global sense. In this light, the division of bodily functions takes on an additional aspect. It is felt that the energy of being flows through us, and that its primary channel goes down the back of the body; it starts above the body and goes through the body like a subtle form of electricity which continues on into the earth. This energy is felt to vary in intensity. Sometimes more is received, and this is attributed to "grace" (*anugerah*), which is connected with some activity or awareness. At other times it may increase or decrease without any clear reason. Thus, the method involved in this reception holds that when attention is relaxed and in the back of the body, one is going along with the natural flow of this energy and one's condition will tend to be calm and accepting. On the other hand, when one's attention is in the front and centered in emotion or desire, this blocks the natural flow of energy by constructing an emotional platform which is promoted and pushed upwards in attempting to impose it on reality. A relaxed, accepting condition is felt to yield harmony and stamina. By contrast, the construction of emotional frames is felt to be in opposition to this natural flow of energy and draws on the energy

stored in the body in order to maintain itself. The body's own energy is easily exhausted, and this lack of reserve coupled with the frustration inherent in opposing reality is felt to be the source of much unhappiness and ill health.

CHAPTER 6

PRACTICE

The practice of Sumarah centers around group meetings which include meditation and discussion. The meetings generally last about three hours and are attended by between five and one hundred people, with an average of about twenty-five participants. There are usually two meditations during a meeting, which can last between five minutes and half an hour with an average of about fifteen minutes. It is possible for there to be as many as four meditations during a meeting or as few as one, and very occasionally none at all. The discussion is generally about problems in meditation and in daily life, and tends to be very animated and convivial.

The actual structure and content of these meetings depends on the *pamong*, which is the term used for the leader and means "guardian" or "guide." The choice of this term was intended to emphasize the leader's position as a servant to the members rather than as a person of absolute authority as is traditionally associated with the term *guru*, which means "teacher." While there is a common core to the various styles of meditation, there is also a great deal of variation in personality, approach and emphasis among the leaders. In what follows, the style of three of the leaders will be examined.

Darno Ong

The clearest and most laconic statement concerning the method of Sumarah comes from a leader of Chinese ancestry who is a Buddhist. His name is Darno Ong. Darno Ong has been involved in Sumarah since about 1955. He works at a social institution in Solo and is about 60 years old. Darno has an unassuming, quiet manner and his meditation method has far less theoretical adornment than many of the other leaders; however, it is still clearly Sumarah. The following is taken from a tape which was made to explain Sumarah meditation techniques, and is an unusually straightforward statement of its central concerns. Darno's Chinese and Buddhist orientation is visible in the absence of emphasis on Tuhan Yang Maha Esa in his presentation and in the lack of any reference to the Javanese theoretical material presented in the preceding section. His meditations are consistent and the special meditation below is repeated every meeting. At his meetings the discussion is quite low-key. Darno's explanation of the Sumarah meditation method is as follows:

I will now try to explain the meditation that we practice here; and when the time comes to discuss special meditation, I ask that you join with me while you are listening to my explanation and we will try to put it into practice. We call the meditation that we do here "relaxed meditation." Thus, it is done with a method based on relaxation. There are two aspects to this practice. The first is called "daily meditation" and the second is called "special meditation." Now I would like to explain what is meant by daily meditation. Daily meditation refers to the way we use our five senses, our thoughts and our desires in daily life. We will now begin with the way to use our five senses. For example, when we use our ears, the basic character of it is reception; just to receive. The terms for this are to "hear" but not to "listen." When you hear my voice, you should receive it in your own place wherever you are. But if you listen and concentrate, it is as if you try to come to where I am in order to receive this explanation. So, when you "hear," it is relaxed, but when you "listen," it is tense.

A second example is the sense of vision. When you "see" something, this is relaxed, but when you "look at" something, this is tense. Actually, our eyes are like the lens of a camera so that when we open our eyes, the scene in front of us just comes in. Later when you are watching a soccer game or a badminton match on the TV and you just watch and "see" it, then you are the viewer and the sports event is what is being viewed. This is relaxed. But, on the other hand, if you concentrate on "looking at" that event, you are no longer a viewer but have become like a participant. So if you have become like a player, when you watch the badminton, you move too, and when you watch the soccer game you also kick the ball. When you do this though, after the match is over you will be tired along with the other players. When you do that, you have let go of your mediation and are no longer a viewer but have become a participant. Another example is the sense of smell. When you just "smell" something, this is right and relaxed, but when you "sniff," this is tense.

Now, concerning the sense of touch, when you just receive the sensation that is there, this is relaxed, but when you try to feel something, this is tense.

So the way to use the senses is to just receive what comes in. But now about thought and the desires.

Thought is a tool for thinking and planning. So the way to use it is so that when you think or plan, you do it here. When you think or when you plan something for later or for the future, that's all right. But when you go or reach into the future while you are making plans for it, this is what is not right. Since your body is here, your thought also must be here. You should prepare, plan, and think here and now, even when it is for the future. Don't reach out and think about things that are far away as if you were far away, or about tomorrow morning as if it were already the present. Later you can practice this. For example, when you are walking, when your thoughts are where you are then you are ready for whatever happens, but when your thoughts are far away then if something happens right in front of you, you won't even know it.

What is meant by "reaching out" is going from here to whatever you're thinking about in your thoughts. So that reaching out happens when your thoughts are far away.

The desires are like that too. For example, you want to go to the movies at Sriwedari [an amusement center]. The movie starts at seven o'clock and you depart from your home at precisely seven o'clock in a *becak* [a kind of three-wheeled cycle which has a place for passengers]. Without even knowing it, you will be pushing the *becak* with your feeling to try to make it go faster. When you do that, when you use your desires like that, you will become tense in your feeling.

If you already understand this, I will now try to explain about daily meditation in a little more depth.

Actually, thought and desire already know what is good and what is not good. For example, if I am told not to smoke by a doctor because I have a cough, my thoughts understand and my desires

understand that smoking has been forbidden. But then it so happens that there comes a time when I very much want to smoke, although at that moment I am still aware that it is not good and that I am not allowed to smoke. However, though I understand this, my willpower fails me and finally I smoke.

A second possibility is that suddenly it occurs to me that I am not allowed to smoke after I have finished a cigarette.

A third possibility is that I want to smoke but I am aware that I am not allowed to smoke so I don't.

It's that way, too, with thought when you plan something which is not good and at the same time are aware of it. So sometimes you just go ahead and do it and are aware of it at the same time. But sometimes you become aware and understand only after you have done something.

But sometimes you plan something but before you do it you become aware of it and stop.

Thus, outside of thought and desire there is still another capacity which can be aware of the activity of thought and desire.

But what about when you have a desire which gets expressed without your being aware of it at all, when your awareness comes only afterwards? This is caused by the power of very strong desires which overwhelms the "knower" and pulls it into the action. But afterwards when the desire is satisfied and you have relaxed, the knower and that of which the knower is aware become a bit separated and then you can realize it.

A second possible condition is that the knower and that which it is aware of are too close together and not relaxed, not far enough apart so that when a desire gets acted out, the knower is unable to maintain its separate awareness and gets overwhelmed and drawn into the action.

A third possible condition happens when you are relaxed and the knower and that which it is aware of are rather far apart. Then even when a desire is acted out, the knower is still aware of it. Thus, the key to all of this is the problem of relaxation. When we are relaxed we are able to be aware of the activity of our thoughts, the activity of our desires, and of our behavior. Therefore, when we are truly in a state of relaxation, the way that we use our senses, thoughts, and desires is good and orderly and this is what we call "daily meditation."

Daily meditation plays an important role. The success of the daily meditation influences the success of the special meditation. That's because when you're relaxed throughout the day, it facilitates relaxation when you do special meditation. Daily meditation and special meditation are closely tied together, and the one cannot be separated from the other. Therefore, we must pay more attention to our daily meditation if we wish to achieve a special meditation which is good. When your daily meditation is harmonious and stable, then when you do special meditation your thoughts and your desires will not trouble you. If this explanation of daily meditation is clear, I will continue with a description of what is done in special meditation. While I am explaining this, I would ask that you do it along with my explanation.

Let us now get ready to do the special meditation.

First of all we relax the whole body.

You should try to receive these instructions wherever you are. When you don't hear clearly, don't try to reach out and listen as if you were here.

The way to relax all of your attributes is to let go of all feelings of attachment, holding on, and grasping. Those of you for whom this is already familiar know that it is enough if you can be aware of areas where there is tension and that in time it will relax itself.

It is best just to use your feelings; don't use your thought, and don't examine what you're doing.

Pay attention to the tension in your shoulders and the back of your neck.

(silence)

There are still those who have not yet relaxed the backs of their necks.

(silence)

Second, give attention to the tension in your chest. Because the tension in the back of the neck, the shoulders and the chest area will slow down the release of tension in other parts of the body. So now relax the tension in your chest. Don't push the energy to the front but rather it is better if the energy is in the back with the intention of settling it down in the area at the center of the back. When the attention is in the back, the energy will follow it by itself. Don't try to push the energy to the back.

(silence)

After the feeling has settled down to the back, let go of it slowly so that the energy can settle down until it rests quietly. The term here is to "rest quietly."

(silence)

Now feel the soles of your feet so that the remainder of energy settles downward.

(silence)

Now we will start to relax the body area by area. We start by relaxing the area from the soles of the feet to the knees.

(silence)

Now relax the thighs. Let go of all feelings of attachment, holding on, and grasping.

(silence)

Now relax the abdomen.

(silence)

Now relax the chest. The chest requires a fairly long time because this is the area of emotion and usually it is hard to keep this area quiet during daily meditation.

(silence)

When the chest area is truly relaxed, the breathing is smooth and the chest feels loose.

(silence)

Now relax the arms, hands and fingers.

(silence)

Now relax the shoulders, back of the neck and the back of the head. This area also requires quite a long time.

(silence)

Now relax the mouth and jaws.

(silence)

Now relax the area round the eyes and the eye balls. This area also requires a fairly long time.

(silence)

Now begin to relax your thoughts and desires. To relax your thoughts, just don't look at or examine anything. To relax your desires, don't try to be right or good and don't be afraid of making mistakes. It is enough to experience and just to be aware. When you get this far, right and wrong are no longer your concerns. Pleasant and unpleasant are also no longer relevant. It is enough just to surrender. Just surrender. The meaning of surrender is that you no longer need anything; you just experience and are aware.

(silence)

With this the practice of special meditation ends and we return to daily meditation. (Ronggowarsito no date, ca. 1978)

Suwondo

The second leader is more in the mainstream of Sumarah practice. His name is Suwondo (Pak Wondo) and he is 53 years old. Almost all of the citations presented above in the section on theory are from tapes of meetings led by Suwondo and his life history is revealing. Suwondo was born in Solo in 1927. His father and mother had produced batik (Javanese cloth) and were from small towns near Solo. When Suwondo was about five, his father died; and he connects his first mystical experience with the death of his father. His story was that during his father's illness he found a marble which had some sort of power and his father's condition improved. However, later the marble was lost and his father died. This kind of belief is by no means unusual in Java.

Suwondo went to school in Solo but was neither a particularly bright nor an avid student. He was very interested in sports, and especially in badminton which is the unofficial Indonesian national

sport. He was also interested in mysticism (*kebatinan*). He stayed in school through the second to last year of high school, when the war started against the returning Dutch. Prior to the Japanese invasion his mother had worked as a diamond merchant as the batik business had apparently failed. After the war and Indonesian independence, he says that a sister pressured him to return to school to get some sort of title, but his interest had gone into a traditional form of mysticism which stressed "astral travel" (*ngraga sukma*) and into badminton. During the early years of independence, in common with many, his family's financial condition was unstable. His first job was as a clerk in a drug store, where he started work in 1950. About 1952 he started a batik business, and in 1955 it failed. Around 1956 a business weaving Balinese cloth was started, and around 1958 it too failed. During this time he maintained his interest in mysticism and badminton, and this was not unrelated to his business fortunes.

In 1959 he had a remarkable experience which he counts as a turning point in his life. At that time he and his wife and her family went to a ceremony held annually to propitiate the Queen of the South Seas (*Nyai Loro Kidul*), who is one of the most prominent of the spiritual characters in Javanese belief. She is traditionally connected by a mystical bond of marriage with the king (*Susuhunan*) in Solo. This ceremony involves a rather large expedition from Solo to Parangtritis, which is on the South coast of Java. In Parangtritis offerings are presented and thrown into the ocean. While Suwondo was there he practiced his astral travel. He describes leaving his body lying with his sleeping family and taking a rather roundabout route to the sea. His intention was to try to approach the Queen of

the South Seas. He entered into the ocean and soon found his path blocked by a forest of grass. He tried to enter but could not. He tried again two more times and still was unable to penetrate the forest. He concluded that he would not be allowed to enter her realm, and returned to his body. On returning he followed the same roundabout route he had taken before. He describes coming into the room where his family was sleeping and his own body was lying, "This is my father-in-law, this is my mother-in-law, this is my sister-in-law, and this is my body, so I go in here." He entered his body, but then suffered a seizure and lost consciousness. His body was spent to the point that he was unable to move or speak. It was some hours before he recovered any movement. Suwondo came away from this experience with a marked fear of death which continued as an incapacitating phobic reaction for years afterward. Suwondo went to native medical practitioners (*dukun*) and doctors who treated him as a psychiatric patient. He did not improve. He himself wonders if his fear of death was not a wish for death in disguise. He was unable to work during this time. In about 1963 he was introduced to Sumarah. It helped a little, and he slowly improved. The leaders would help him to relax so that he could sleep, which was a big problem for him. He had a hard time going to sleep because he was afraid of waking up paralyzed or dead. He was afraid to sleep alone, and he was afraid of having closed doors around him. For example, the door to his bedroom was not closed and the door to the bathroom was closed but not latched. Early in his association with Sumarah he received two premonitions in the form of words. The first was "the Hardo of Solo" ("*Hardo Solo*"). Suhardo (Pak Hardo) will be the third leader discussed, and is one of the

founding members of Sumarah who lives in Yogyakarta. The other message was "director of a bank" ("*direktor bank*"). These messages did not seem to have much to do with his life at that time, in that he was still unable to work or to meditate by himself. He continued to improve, however, and continued his participation in Sumarah. In 1967 Suwondo had his first experience with leading a meeting when he was forced to try it because all of the other leaders were sick or out of town. In about 1969 he became a regular leader, and around this time he was given a position as the director of a local bank. He has continued in both of these capacities and has also become the spiritual head of the Sumarah organization in the Surakarta district. He has a wife and four children, and is an extroverted, open character who generates a great deal of personal warmth. He frequently draws on his "ten years of illness" for examples and insights into the problems that arise in the meetings. The examples drawn are often very frank and revealing, and his references to them often tend to make people who have brought up similar problems in the meetings feel more comfortable.

Suwondo's meetings are the liveliest and least inhibited of any of the Sumarah meetings in the Solo area. His approach to problems that arise in the meeting is illustrated in the section on cases which follows. The meditation method practiced by Suwondo is quite flexible. Sometimes meetings pass without any meditations and are filled with the discussion of Sumarah techniques and of problems. At other times the meditations are without any comment or guidance at all; however, his general meditations can be divided into two classes. The first is a strict relaxation meditation which is similar

to Darno's but is less methodical. According to Suwondo:

The fundamental procedure for meditation is to examine or know where among your tools (e.g., thought, emotion, ego, and the body) there is still conflict. When everything is correct--when there is no conflict--it's easier. Because when there is unity the tools help each other and progress together and this is quicker. But when there is conflict, they influence each other too; they disturb each other. When it's like that they don't form one purpose or perspective and they are all fragmented. Your attention can't be clear when it's all split up like that. (Grogol 6/1/79: 205-206)

In the second class of meditations, after there is less tension present, the tendency is to be more expansive and didactic as in the following:

All right, let's try to apply this. Let's try to put what we just talked about into practice, how about it? When it is done right, meditation is based on the various capabilities present and it goes as far as they are able to go. How about it, though; before we had quite a lot of theory; now let's try to do some practice and meditate as best we can. Just now you were told about some of the obstacles in meditation like when the ego tries to manipulate the other tools in a way that is not harmonious; this can obstruct your meditation. Try it and you will see that if your tools are in harmony it will help your meditation.

The basis is belief, belief in Tuhan or belief in reality, the laws of reality. This is the first thing. Therefore, in meditation the tools are united in surrender. This means that the ego can't stand on its own; it can't do anything without the other tools. To take a simple example, if I want to drink tea, if I wish to drink tea; if the ego has a desire all by itself without the help of the hand, the mouth, and so on, it can't drink. The desire of the ego to drink cannot be accomplished and even the taste of the tea, whether it be sweet or whatever, cannot be realized without the other tools. So I can taste if it is satisfying, bitter, refreshing or sweet if I am united together with the taste buds; only with the help of the taste buds can you taste the sweetness or the bitterness or whatever. So the ego can't stand or act by itself if it isn't supported and together with the other tools. That's why the ego must try to work in harmony and to strive for one goal which is surrender. Moreover, in our belief in the existence of Tuhan, in fact, Tuhan is the totally fundamental strength which embraces and is the whole of nature and because of that we cannot free ourselves from that strength because we are a part of it and are totally contained by nature. So if you look at the ego and compare it with the whole of nature, it is nothing. There is a saying that holds that if the

universe is compared with a desert, our world is a grain of sand and we are on that grain of sand. What are we then if we are compared with this vast desert? And if the world itself is only a grain of sand, what does that make us?

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . . (silence)

Let us together yield in surrender to Tuhan while confessing that we ourselves can do nothing at all without the life which was given us. The universe which surrounds us is all one; try to fit in with it, to be in accord with it in your thoughts and your deeds.

Allah . . .

So reality is clean and there is no conflict because your attention and your intention have only one purpose--to unite with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. This meditation is an art for living so that life can be faced.

Don't keep thinking about things. Don't try to control. You should just follow, follow the process of the meditation, follow the process of rasa, follow the process of your own being. When we enter into this our conditions and our capacities are varied. When you can be truly clean, things will become clearer. According to another outlook, when that happens we have a clear light which shines within us because there is no struggle or conflict. Then there is no darkness within us. On the contrary, the clear light shines within us because there is no struggle or conflict, and from it there arises a freedom but the freedom has responsibilities.

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . .

So in addition to its use in finding neutrality, peace and calm within, this meditation also helps us to carry on our daily lives in an open, accepting fashion. Another use comes when we are able to be neutral and can examine and correct ourselves, and then we can confront the life that we lead. When our special meditation attains neutrality, this will influence our daily life; and then in facing our everyday life we can observe our condition carefully and monitor the activities of our tools so that they don't transgress against our true nature. When you are able to apply this to your behavior it will benefit your spirit.

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . .

Try to pay attention to your present condition so that you can learn about it and feel it more fully. Most of you have attained your limit but there are those who have not gotten that far because you are still influenced by your own condition. (Kerten 6/11/79)

There is an earthy, almost ribald quality which often enters into Suwondo's meetings. He will openly talk about farting (which is a frequent outcome of the relaxation during meditation), sex, love (a highly taboo subject for young people), mental illness (using his own experience as an example), and death. These often uninhibited

discussions are the obvious complement to the refinement which characterizes more formal relationships in Javanese society.

Suwondo has a large body of theory which he draws on in making explanations. Much of this material is outlined in the two sections of theory. Suwondo's theoretical material comes straight out of the Javanese mainstream of Sumarah. Much of it came from the third leader, whose name is Suhardo.

Suhardo

Suhardo (Pak Hardo) is one of the founding members of Sumarah. He is 80 years old and in good health, but cataracts have taken most of his vision. He has been with Sumarah since the moment of its founding in 1935. There was a kind of triumvirate for the first 15 years of Sumarah's existence. Sukinohartono (Pak Kino) was the recipient of the revelation and the spiritual head of the organization, Suhardo was the head of education and development, and Sutadi was the head of organization and administration. Suhardo lived in many cities in Central and East Java demonstrating and spreading Sumarah. He has the most fiery and "crude and direct" (*kasar*) delivery of any of the leaders in the Central Java area, and he is looked upon as the most spiritually mature member of Sumarah at present.

Suhardo does not lead any regular meetings any more. He does occasionally come to Solo to lead the weekly leader-training meeting. However, Suhardo's presentations are aimed at that audience and thus contain more Sumarah theory than has been touched on up to this point. Consequently, a meditation led by Suhardo will be included in Part IV, Advanced Practice and Leadership, after more theory has been introduced.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the terms "daily meditation" (*sujud harian*) and "special meditation" (*sujud pamiji*) are used throughout Sumarah. As is described above, daily meditation constitutes a sustained awareness which is ideally to be practiced at all times and emphasizes self-criticism, not being under the influence of emotion, and relaxation. As is illustrated above, "special meditation" is a term for a special period devoted to relaxation and to learning and practicing what is termed *pasrah* or *sumarah*, both of which mean "surrender." The special meditations are typically accompanied by explanations, repetition of the word "*Allah*," and, in the case of Suhardo, a kind of relaxed, spontaneous singing using the syllables "na," "ni," and "nu." A strong connection is seen between daily meditation and special meditation. It is felt that when the special meditation is deep the daily meditation will be relaxed and aware, and that when the daily meditation is attentive and relaxed, the special meditation will reflect this in its acceptance and depth. On the other hand, it is felt that when the daily meditation is sloppy and careless, the special meditation will be spent cleaning up the mess.

A striking element of this practice, which is more or less apparent in the cited meditations, is the appreciation that reception is more important than understanding. It is felt that one often receives feelings and thoughts which are of unknown origin and meaning. According to Sumarah, these experiences should simply be accepted and neither denied nor over-emphasized. It is felt that such experiences sometimes explain themselves and sometimes remain a mystery, but that the real issue in this and in Sumarah practice in general

is opening and keeping open one's sensory windows and keeping one's relationship with reality honest and accurate.

In the following section two cases will be examined to illustrate the application of this practice to everyday problems. The cases come from one of Suwondo's meetings.

CHAPTER 7

CASES

The detail and extent of the discussion of problems and experiences can range from very brief and specific questions to lengthy expositions which are sometimes returned to again and again during a meeting. The style and content of many of these exchanges seem very similar to group therapy. Some of the topics discussed and some of the techniques used by the leaders in responding are not present in any Western approach; however, the two cases cited below show the application of the Sumarah practice to problems common in the human experience.

The application of Sumarah methods to the discussion of emotionally charged everyday problems is patterned and can roughly be divided into two stages. The first stage focuses on the individual's acceptance of his own reactions in the situation, and this involves the evaluation of those reactions using Sumarah precepts as criteria. During this stage the strong emotions connected with the response are examined and an attempt is made to calm them by placing them in a broader context and seeing that they are not as big an event as they seemed at the time. The second stage continues and completes this process by focusing on the acceptance of the context and the people who induced the person's response. This involves a still broader and more humane perspective in which sympathy for one's

tormentors is recommended and direct acceptance of the experience is recommended by recognizing its positive aspects such as *tepa slira* and being open and grateful for the experience. Problems are sometimes viewed in a karmic context, and an appeal is also sometimes made to simply accept the experience as a lesson which one should try to be strong enough to receive.

Dewi

The first case was about average in duration and was presented by an attractive Solonese woman of about thirty-five years of age who will be referred to as Dewi. Dewi is a teacher in a primary school, as are most of the people who attend this particular meeting which is held on the outskirts of Solo. She is the mother of three children, and her husband is an administrator in another Solo school. There has been some marital discord, which was the initial reason for her coming to the meetings. She had calmed down a good deal since beginning the meetings, and her relationship with her husband had improved. She has an unusually emotional character for a Javanese, and had in the past been inclined to ruminate on problems to the point of becoming semi-delusional. She is also rather argumentative, which stands out in a Javanese context. She is the treasurer of her school, and this was the setting of the following incident.

Dewi was accused of embezzling money out of the school treasury, a not at all uncommon event in Indonesia.¹ The discussion of this problem was temporally divided into the two stages described above. During the first period (Grogol 6/1/79: 212-214), she was emotional and angry, and both denied the accusation and attacked her

attacker. She connected her accuser's attack with a previous incident which she felt had caused a desire for revenge. He had accused her and demanded a financial statement, and she put one up on the bulletin board in the hall. According to her report, the school fund was actually in debt to her. She made her response in this public way because the attacks had been made repeatedly and in front of the students. The accusations and arguments had started on a Saturday and were repeated on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. During these attacks she had argued heatedly. On Thursday she had adopted a policy of not responding, and the meeting at which this was recounted was on Friday.

The leader's response during this first stage is to try to get her to see her own reactions clearly and get them into perspective. For example, in the following he chides her emotional indulgence:

Dewi: But this is a money problem. I was alleged to be taking bribes; I was thought to be corrupt.
 Wondo: It's not important. You should just be aware of it. Not responding doesn't necessarily mean that you're wrong. Later the reality of the situation will come out, and other people will know. If you can, don't be like this; the emotion right now.

He felt that the report on the bulletin board was not necessary, and generally did not advocate confrontation but patience and waiting for the process of exposure to complete itself.

It's not important. Later you will be in a strong position. Why don't you want to let the process complete itself? That's what you should do, you know.

He commended her policy of not responding as a sign of awareness and recommended that she continue it, if she was strong enough.

Just try this, just try to follow and understand the process. How about it? Isn't that more relaxing? Don't fuss and fight so. This is what is not good. Your support is strong, but

you lack patience; if you could be patient for a little while it would benefit you.

He then went on to describe a personal experience when someone had come to his home and been rude to his aging mother. The Javanese have a very strong sense of family commitment, and his response reflected this:

If it had just been me, I wouldn't want to make a fuss about it; but when it is my infirm mother, it is my duty. I had to be calm, but my emotion rose and I thought, "I'd like to punch that guy in the nose." The anger didn't come out, but there was an urge to punch him in the nose--treating an old lady like that.

It is very common for the leader to compare the experience being discussed to a personal experience. This generally has the effect of impressing on the person that their experience was not unique, as it did in this instance when, after the rather lengthy depiction of this experience, Dewi said, "So you got mad?" and he replied, "Yes, it happens." The first stage of the discussion of this problem concluded with Dewi making what seemed a fanciful statement in the basically non-violent Solo context. She said that her accuser had been worried about being jumped for his accusations and had been carrying a knife in school that day. The leader chides her:

When you get frightened like this, it's in your own imagination, isn't it? In the past you were like that, but now, over time, it has gotten less. Don't keep going over and over things; it limits your ability to progress. It's a shame. You should become more able to criticize yourself and your tools. This meditation isn't just being quiet; it's to change your attitudes and your character.

The first stage of this process sometimes continues right into or is mixed in with the second, but in this case the two were separated by about an hour of other discussion. When Dewi brought the subject up again (Grogol 6/1/79: 230-232) she was much more

relaxed and ready for the second stage wrap-up which happens in almost all such incidents. As above, during the initial presentation the problem is usually left in the experiencer's terms and the actual reactions to the situation examined. During the second stage an effort is made to expand understanding of the situation, and this involves trying to accept the perspective and behavior of the other participants in the event, for example, and then trying to see the problem in terms of natural law or Tuhan Yang Maha Esa and to accept the full experience.

In this case, Dewi re-opened the subject by asking if she bore a grudge, and the leader's reply drew the event into the context of natural law, in this instance referred to as *karma* (the concept of *karma* has a long tradition in this Indic civilization). In reply to her question about having a grudge, the leader explained that there are two kinds of vengeful responses. The first is when the vengeance is premeditated and based not on acceptance of the full event but on one's opinion about it. The second type of vengeful response is one which is purely spontaneous, and this is felt to reflect a weakness of character which must be accepted as part of the process of expanding one's awareness to understand and control it. He then continues:

But once again now, what happened is history now but it carries over into the present; that's reality. While it was happening to you, in fact, you were not really wrong in thinking, "I've treated him well and now, although I'm not at fault, I'm hated and insulted like this and I'm not even in the wrong." That's all right. That's true, and when it comes out spontaneously like that it's all right. But this event is the return of *karma* and it has its good side for your psyche too. It's like this, you think to yourself, "Something like this happens to me when, in fact, I've never insulted him, so why is he insulting me?" In fact this is just the result of your having insulted someone else before.

The reference to *karma* struck a responsive chord in Dewi. She replied that a month before she had accidentally shamed another teacher, and that this had seemed like her *karmic* due. However, she held back from full acceptance, adding that she still felt it important to demonstrate her innocence. The leader worked on this reservation by saying that it is all right to want to show one's innocence but not to do so with too much emotion, and he made a distinction between emotion in social application and emotion in isolation as when she wrote up the report to put on the bulletin board, "In that it's all right to use emotion. When you're writing it's all right whether it's with emotion or without." He then chided her for having stuck the report up on the bulletin board and called this crude, and then questioned her intention in having done so. She replied that she wanted the students to know; and he replied that that intention was all right, but then continues:

A single action can have more than one meaning, but if he gets hurt by this you should have sympathy for him because you have already been hurt yourself. The problem is that when your actions are based on emotion there is usually an ulterior motive.

The desire to demonstrate her innocence to her students was acceptable but intending to discredit and hurt her colleague was not. The danger was that the intention to hurt her colleague would ride in unnoticed on her desire to show her innocence. She should have learned *tepa slira* from her own experience and now be capable of greater compassion. She then admits that "the ulterior motive was a trial of strength."

With the main points of the second stage having been covered, the discussion tailed off with Dewi relating another connected incident when gossip had it that she had asked an authority for help with this problem when, in fact, she had not. Dewi got very angry

and told "him to tell me who it was who said that so that I could slap his face." Again she was counselled that the behavior was all right under the circumstances, but that she was being carried away by emotion and that this sort of behavior should not be used as a general model or that she was sure to offend people. The other participants in the meeting then joined in the discussion, and it came out that the incident which she had felt to have motivated his attack on her had come when she had witnessed his hitting a student in his class and had reported him. The other teachers then joined in advising her to have sympathy for her rather unstable attacker who "just does whatever he pleases" and that "if you have sympathy you cannot bear a grudge." The leader, who is the director of a bank, then said the following about her having reported the teacher's striking of a student:

Yes, have sympathy; I'm like that too. I can be very strict, but then later when I sort things out to myself, I feel sympathetic. I must be firm about my responsibilities, though. It's as if they are two different things and you can't mix them.

Sumarno

This first case is a rather pithy and neat example of the stages of the discussion process for an emotionally charged problem. The following case is an unusually elaborated example of this process. This second case was related by the principal of another grammar school on the outskirts of Solo, who will be referred to as Sumarno. Sumarno is a rather small man of ordinary appearance. He is about fifty years of age, and is unusually intense and earnest for a Solonese. Sumarno is married and the father of four children, and lives in a town adjoining Solo to the South.

As is amply illustrated in the following case, the position of principal in the Indonesian school system is a demanding and difficult one. In addition to the predictable problems with teachers and students, a principal faces a great deal of bureaucratic red-tape. Sumarno also has a structural problem in that his school is not housed in one building but is divided between sharing a part of another school and an old storage shed. Sumarno often arrives at meetings apparently distracted and upset. In the following instance, Sumarno was verbally chastised by a superior in the bureaucratic hierarchy for failing to follow an official admonition concerning the organization of classes, and the following is a description of that incident and its aftermath.

As in this case, Sumarno frequently prefaced the first stage (Grogol 6/1/79: 225-30) of a discussion of his woes by questioning the philosophical relationship between hardships and difficulties encountered and rationality and free will. Sumarno was advised by the leader that when problems come up "one should first act with rationality because a cool head is what is needed." Sumarno then asked if during the period of waiting to find a solution one should rely on free will or if it all depended on the will of Tuhan, to which he received this reply:

You do it for yourself but the choice that comes out of your use of free will is not your own personal desire; you should not use emotion. So you ask yourself, "What would it be best for me to do; what's the best way to handle this problem?" When you do it like that you are using your thoughts in a healthy way rather than a way which is enclosed in emotion, and the way that you act as a result of it will be different. Isn't it true that there is one kind of rationality which is encased in your own opinions and another which is open to reality?

Sumarno then said that he had something he would like to talk about

but that the emotion connected with it made it feel as though it would be an imposition on the group to bring it up. In fact, during his long and unusual domination of the meeting a certain amount of tension did develop. The leader replied that he must assess for himself when it was appropriate to bring something up. Then with a voice trembling with anger and emotion, but at the same time quiet and refined (*halus*), Sumarno told his story. The gist of it was that Sumarno had received an order from the district school authority that classes three and four must go to school in the afternoon. Sumarno had classes three and four located in the storage shed part of his school; and, because class four was divided into two sections, they constituted three sections altogether. Actually, in the storage shed there were only four blackboards, so that if all three sections were there at once, the blackboards must be divided up 2/1/1. Having one of the sections go to the part of his school which was shared with another school would take too much time, so he decided to make do by having class four come in in the morning and class three alone in the afternoon. He was strongly and publicly reprimanded for not having implemented the order.

When I wanted to respond, I wasn't allowed to speak. That's what makes me mad. What could I do? So I said, "I would like to give an explanation." "There is no explanation." "Then I beg your pardon." "It's not good enough just to beg my pardon." What the heck is this?

The leader's response to this was an attempt to mollify him and induce acceptance:

Just accept it. It's not important; just let it be. Let it work itself out because it's up to other people. I've been through that too. It's all right--just let it go. It's up to them. It's up to them. When it was me, I just tried to make myself willing to accept whatever they had to give.

Probably because of the extremely emotional nature of this problem, the effort to calm him down took precedence over any recommendations of self-examination, and a certain amount of strain was apparent in the leader's voice as he told Sumarno:

Wondo: Sometimes that's the way it goes. So I recommend that you have a little love.

Sumarno: A little [not believing what he heard] . . .

Wondo: Love, sympathy.

Sumarno: For whom?

Wondo: The ones who yelled at you.

Sumarno: The ones who yelled at me?!

Wondo: That's the way to do it, you know.

Sumarno: That guy yelled at me and then went off and bragged about it.

Wondo: Have sympathy for someone who isn't aware of what he's doing.

Sumarno: When he was born, sure, yes, he must still have been good. But frankly, those times are past.

Wondo: Yes, and his character come to this.

An appreciation in Javanese thought which is referred to in this exchange is that an infant is in open reception of reality. This openness guarantees the appropriateness and consequently the goodness of an infant's responses. The acceptance and sympathy practiced in Sumarah are seen as tools to help one return to this open receptivity, which is felt to be the fundamental aspect of all human beings.

Sumarno then goes on by describing how he was forced to scold a child in implementing the order and then continued by trying to intellectually take the point of view of his superiors. Another person at the meeting then pointed out that Sumarno was lucky he wasn't a woman because the commentor felt that a woman would have been mortified by the experience. Sumarno's interpretation of this was a reflection of the friction present at the meeting between Sumarno and the other participants which I cannot fully explain.

He took the comment to mean that it was part of his job as a principal to take such abuse, and he replied angrily:

You just try it if you become a principal. But don't drool about the extra pay, which comes to sixteen dollars a month.

The leader tried to calm them down:

Just let it pass. This is an exercise, a mental exercise. That applies to everyone.

The leader then again stressed trying to make oneself willing to take whatever the situation demanded and to wait for the reality to sort the problem out. Another revealing exchange occurred at this point, when Sumarno described how, if it were he and he were in error with one of his personnel, he would want to know about it and correct it. The leader responded, "Don't do that. According to our studies here, the way we do this isn't like that." Sumarno replied by admitting that his comment had been based on emotion (self-pity). The leader went on to say that the danger is that if the experience and the response become separated it makes it much harder to accept the experience. This can cause a long-term disturbance, and is a potential source of illness, as it was for the leader in the past. He said that, "I got sick. I was sick for a year."

Sumarno then went on to describe one of the implications of these official dicta, which was that the children must have sports during their first period. For classes three and four, which come in during the afternoon, that meant being out in the tropical sun at noon and this is not considered healthy. However, Sumarno was afraid of further reprimands and funding allocation cuts if he did not enact it.

Sumarno then related how he had gone off on his motorcycle

in order to delay his response to the inspector who had reprimanded him until he could calm down. During the time that Sumarno was gone, the inspector came back and went in and occupied Sumarno's office. When Sumarno returned he found the inspector sitting in his chair waiting to give him a further reprimanding for not doing his work. Sumarno commented, "That guy just isn't right." The leader commended Sumarno's effort to calm down, and then commented:

It's not important. From the point of view of our study here, it's a pity; and from the point of view of his psyche, it's truly a shame.

The next exchange revealed the strong and serious emphasis on tepa slira and the utility of unpleasant experiences in expanding one's awareness and understanding.

Sumarno: My feeling is that for as long as I have lived, this is the first time I have ever heard such truly stinging accusations.

Wondo: So you have added to your experience.

Javanese psychology is very long-term in orientation and sees human life, from birth to death, as one continuous event in which early excesses have consequences later. Whether these excesses be emotional, sexual, in eating or whatever, they have the effect of disturbing the balance of the body. Another meeting participant commented in a conciliatory fashion:

But there will be a result. This inspector will eventually develop heart trouble. Yelling at people like that has an effect on the heart, the intestines, and gives you ulcers. When that happens he won't even be able to move.

The leader agreed that this was the pity of it, but then went on to say that the real shame of it was the vibrations of hate that this instance and other such disturbances produced and the effects this hate had (such as on this meeting) as it spread from the actual

event, "Actually, the pity is right here because of the vibrations."

Sumarno continued by describing the actual circumstances of his upbraiding, which took place in front of all the teachers in his school with the women "all on the verge of tears." He said that his prestige with his teachers did not suffer but that they all defended him. The leader commented:

It's all right. In time you will receive strength from the experience. You just need to try to be patient and wait for it to work itself out.

Sumarno went on to relate another associated incident. One of the teachers had recently given birth; however, the baby was not full-term and had died after a day. The day of the baby's death happened to be the day of the inspector's visit, and when the inspector had left, all the teachers went to express their condolences.

After the visit to the woman who lost the baby they couldn't bring themselves to return to school again. My colleagues wouldn't go back there but went home with the usual complaints of upset stomach and what have you. So it was a free day. Thursday and Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, I was there but the teachers didn't come.

The leader then summed up this first part of the discussion of this problem by saying:

It's all right. This can be used for your study here, and in time it will all seem different; just wait and see. I myself experienced something like that to the point where I got sick. It was like this but kept going on and on and was so strong you wouldn't have believed it! It was a disastrous year, but that's just the way it goes sometimes.

The heuristic stages presented above do not apply as neatly in this case as they did in the first case. This case was a great deal more emotionally charged than is usual, and a lot of the discussion was devoted to just airing the experience and trying to calm Sumarno down. The final part of the discussion of this problem

(Grogol 6/1/79: 232-234) was separated from the preceding by about five minutes. When Sumarno began to speak again he was much calmer and more subdued. Sumarno opened by asking about his own attitude in trying to find a solution to his problem, and the leader answered:

In seeking a way to correct the problem you should frame it as, "What would it be best for me to do?" Then eventually there will be an indication of what should be done. Even though you don't initially receive an answer, your question should be, "What would it be best to do?" Sometimes help does not come from yourself but from outside. For example, it could happen that someone else could help by shaking up the situation.

Sumarno then said that when a person gets very angry words like those that came out of the inspector sometimes happen, and that if it was really necessary, he was willing to take it. At this, the leader responded, "As long as it's you that says it." Sumarno then finished by saying that, "The meaning is still inside." The term for "inside" here is *batin*, which refers to the inner aspects of consciousness and experience and the place where human beings touch on reality and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. *Batin* is the content of experience and is contrasted with the external aspects--the form--of experience which is called *lahir*. *Batin* is the essence and *lahir* is the appearance. With this signal of acceptance the most important criterion of this discussion process had been fulfilled although some of the considerations in the two stages had not been covered.

In this case, it was only after this general acceptance had been attained that Sumarno started to look at his own personal responses in the situation.

While I was being yelled at, I was solid; even afterwards I was solid. To be frank, though, I'm usually a person who, um, get's afraid in that kind of situation, but I was solid.

By this time Sumarno was quite relaxed and emotionally played out,

and an open discussion of his situation and other similar bureaucratic problems and experiences had begun. During this discussion the leader made the statement that:

I'm not saying that you have to be strong--oh no. If you are staggered by this, that's all right, it's okay. This has been a disturbance to your feelings. It's all right. But we must have a firm grip on rationality. A cool head is what's needed here. A cool head and reality itself will cause the problem to take care of itself.

After this comment, the discussion tailed off, and this long discussion, and the meeting itself, came to a close.

Conclusion

As these cases illustrate, the Javanese place great emphasis on patience and acceptance in situations in which confrontation would also be an apparent alternative. This approach is related to the Javanese understanding of what a human being is. We are seen as being open by nature; and this openness and the reality to which it is open delimit the kinds of intentions, understandings and behavior which can be associated with existence. Narrow or selfish intentions are characterological and ecological problems which draw one away from the actual situation and are paid for with blindness and vulnerability. The Javanese assume that we are all open by nature, whether or not we are aware of it. Thus, while perspectives and opinions may clash and conflict, at the fundamental level to which we are all inherently responsible all human beings have the same open experiential base which is founded in the same reality. It is felt that a trust in the processes of reality and an attitude of acceptance are far more reliable guides in sorting out differences than is emotionally based opinion. One opinion or another may triumph

for the moment, but in time the inexorable processes of reality come to the fore. In the long term it is felt that reality is intolerant of behavioral error whether it be characterological or environmental. The person or group which does not conform to reality's demands will suffer for it and die from physiological or ecological pathology. Javanese behavior in general, and Sumarah practice in particular, can be viewed as an attempt to apply this perspective to everyday life. As is seen in the cases cited above, this entails investing as little energy and emotion as possible in disputed points and trusting in and waiting for reality to clarify them. In a larger sense, however, it is felt that life and energy come from the experience of reality. Consequently, an accepting, open relationship with reality gives strength and balance, while a narrow, emotional perspective consumes energy to support itself. Thus, the honest and accepting reception of reality is seen as the source of health and the only basis for any satisfactory mode of behavior.

PART IV

ADVANCED PRACTICE AND LEADERSHIP

The practice of the Sumarah method is felt to induce gradual changes in attitude, character and behavior. These changes are felt to be basically patterned and predictable, although some individual variation is always present. The stages of development are depicted in a didactic body of theory. The emphasis in this theory is pragmatic, and it is used to try to elucidate and help members of the group cope with their experiences. In this part, the theory used by Sumarah in Solo describing these stages of development will be presented, for the most part, as expounded by Suwondo. It will be presented along with some of the coping tactics commonly used in its application. This will be followed by a discussion of practice in which the techniques and the training procedures for leaders will be described and two of the senior leaders will be cited talking about leadership. This will come from the weekly meeting in Solo which is devoted to leader training. To conclude this part, cases will be presented from regular meetings in which the techniques are applied.

CHAPTER 8

THEORY

Sensitivity and Selectivity

The Sumarah method is felt to center on learning how not to avoid reality and how to receive reality more directly. This entails a gradual increase in awareness or "sensitivity" (*peka*) and in understanding or "selectivity" (*pilah*). A third term is "consciousness" (*kesadaran*), which is the combination of the two. The increase in sensitivity and selectivity is accompanied by an actual increase in perceptual intake. This is felt to be a long process, which begins with an intellectual intention and carries on through various stages of decreasing ego separation and increasing consciousness until it arrives at "surrender" (*sumarah*). The practice is seen as a gradual one of expanding one's awareness through the meditation and then allowing one's understanding to catch up and conform to the expanded awareness. The increase in awareness is what is termed "sensitivity," and is related to the ability to receive accurately the stimulæ with which one is confronted. The increase in understanding is what is termed "selectivity," which is the capacity to discriminate and differentiate the perceptions received such that appropriate response becomes possible. These two functions are closely tied together, and their basic relationship in this process is expressed as follows:

Thought sometimes gets misled, doesn't it? But that's the way it is. Because of that, our study here is to make rasa sensitive first, and then you can be as selective as you need to as long as your rasa is sensitive first. When you haven't practiced this, the head starts analyzing and rasa gets lost. So you just have to follow the process. (Grogol 6/1/79: 215)

The actual process of increasing sensitivity and selectivity is depicted as follows.

The first stage in this process occurs during special meditation, and is termed *luyut*. *Luyut* is a pleasant, drifting, semi-conscious sensation which looks like and feels like a light sleep. It is felt that this state is experienced when the amount of stimulæ ingested (the sensitivity) exceeds the ego's capacity for absorption (selectivity). Because the ego is incapable of perceiving all of the stimulæ with which it is presented, it loses consciousness and falls into the light sleep of *luyut*. A useful analogy to this process is that of the eye when suddenly presented with light of much greater intensity than that to which it is adjusted. The eye automatically closes while the pupil contracts and prepares to receive its new situation. *Luyut* is discussed as follows:

Luyut is your limit. It's the limit of your ability to be aware. Later it will change again. Later the *luyut* will start farther along--in as much as you have deepened your consciousness. Then when you reach the same place again, it won't take you unawares. But when you go deeper still, *luyut* will happen again. In the past, before you had gotten this far you would have lost consciousness, but not now. In the future, after you have experienced this a number of times, you won't lose consciousness. That's where progress comes into it. (Grogol 6/1/79: 218)

The mechanism felt to underlie this process is founded on viewing the body as a collection of sensory responses wherein information enters. When the sensitivity exceeds the ego's ability to process the information and rasa encountered (whether it be too painful,

too confusing, too unsettling or whatever), the information and the experience connected with it are denied and blocked out. These unassimilated and undigested experiences remain rather like unwelcome guests sitting in the hall: as long as they are not received, that door, that sense, cannot be used and the information it contains is not available. In the *luyut* stage of this process, those senses are forced open, the ego is overwhelmed and falls into a light sleep, during which it is felt to be absorbing a little bit of what is passing it by. The second stage of this process is characterized by strong emotion and especially anger, depression, anxiety and confusion. This is the response of the ego to this previously unprocessed material and to the information received through this newly opened portal. This is considered a necessary stage in the process of assimilating this new material and allowing the sense to remain open. In the third stage of this process, the ego attains selectivity by completing its assimilation of this material and making its adjustment to the new information and perspective with which it is presented. With this, things calm down and the process can start over again. This process is repeated over and over again, and, bit by bit, small increments of experience are entered by consciousness while sensitivity and selectivity increase. The repressed material encountered in the second stage of this process is of compelling interest to the ego being as it defines the ego's limits and the character of its outlook; however, this is not felt to be the purpose of this process. The primary purpose is felt to be to clear or open these senses, not to dwell on the offal that this cleansing generates, although it must necessarily be accepted and learned from.

At the start of a person's practice of Sumarah, the *luyut* stage typically takes a few weeks, which would include a few meditations. It might take a couple of months to go through the whole process in adding an increment of sensitivity and its accompanying selectivity. However, a great deal of variation is reported. This is especially true in the initial stages of this process. One man said that he spent his first seven years of meditation snoozing in a state of *luyut*. A connection is drawn between the difficulty of the material to be absorbed and the length of time required for the process. In this case the man was suffering from psychological distress which was felt to retard the process. As one becomes more experienced in Sumarah practice and more familiar with this process, it is felt to become subtler, quicker, and less disruptive.

The stages of growth in sensitivity and selectivity are related in two continua which show the manner in which such development is construed and the relationship between these two functions. The first which will be considered is that of understanding or selectivity. The first level of understanding is *ngerti*, which is an intellectual grasp of something, an understanding which is limited to thought. An example of this would be when one realizes that one has done something wrong and notes it with a slight feeling of regret. The second level of understanding is *ngakoni*, which relates to confession and is an understanding which encompasses the whole ego. On this level of understanding, the realization of having done something wrong is accompanied by more feeling; and the error itself is seen in more depth. The third level of understanding is *ngrumangsani*, which is an understanding which is based on *rasa* and is more accepting and

inclusive in its grasp. In this case the realization of having done something wrong enters into a broader perspective, and the feeling of regret becomes both deeper and less self-concerned. The fourth level of understanding is *nglengganani*, which is attained when the understanding corresponds to *rasa murni* and thus yields no separation from the experience or from reality itself. In this fourth phase, the realization of having done something wrong is completed. In the three preceding levels of understanding, the recognition of the error induced a kind of conflict and separation from the actual present context. Thinking about the error and either justifying or condemning oneself pulls one out of the present and into that incident and the feelings and understandings one has about it. It is not yet honestly confronted and released. In the case of *ngerti* this discontinuity may be brief and slight, but in *ngakoni* and *ngrumangsani* the disruption and displacement can be considerable. In *nglengganani* the understanding returns to the present and is seen in its real perspective--neither denied nor over-emphasized. With this the experience is confronted and released.

Selectivity, as expressed in the above continuum, is felt to comprise the active component of experience--that in which one tries to understand and fit one's response into the real situation. Sensitivity, on the other hand, relates to the passive component of experience--that in which one receives and is simply aware of what is there rather in the manner of a camera's response when the lens shutter is opened. However, the two are felt to be closely tied together, and the one is both complemented and limited by the other. People generally start the practice in a tangle of

understanding and awareness, and the relationship between the two is not apparent. The first step in the process of development is to pry sensitivity and selectivity apart. This separation is experiential, and it results from practice. The watershed in the development of consciousness is crossed with the attainment of "awareness of thought" (*eling ing pikir*) which occurs when sufficient awareness is in the present and spread throughout the body so as to give thought a delimited perspective. Before this stage of awareness, thought seems to be the whole of experience and the experiencer moves from one thought to the next seeking comfort and resolution. With the attainment of "awareness of thought," the limited nature of thought within the totality of being is grasped and thought itself is encompassed by this awareness. With this development, comfort and meaning come to be sought not in thoughts about one's experience but in the experience of life itself. "Awareness of thought" encompasses the *ngerti* level of understanding.

The second level of awareness is "awareness of feeling" (*eling ing rasa*). "Awareness of feeling" is attained when sufficient energy is released from the ego processes by relaxation and acceptance to place feeling in a delimited perspective. Previous to this development, the experiencer necessarily feels bound to the rises and falls of emotion and feeling, and he attempts to control and manage his experience as best he can. In "awareness of thought," it had been recognized that thought is merely a tool in the larger frame of experience but the delimited nature of feeling itself was not yet discerned. Feeling is encompassed by awareness when its necessarily transient nature is truly appreciated and accepted, and when consciousness of

Figure 4. Sensitivity and Selectivity Continua

Selectivity (understanding)

nglengganani	understanding in rasa murni (reality)
ngrumangsani	understanding in rasa (feeling)
ngakoni	understanding in ego (confession)
ngerti	understanding in thought

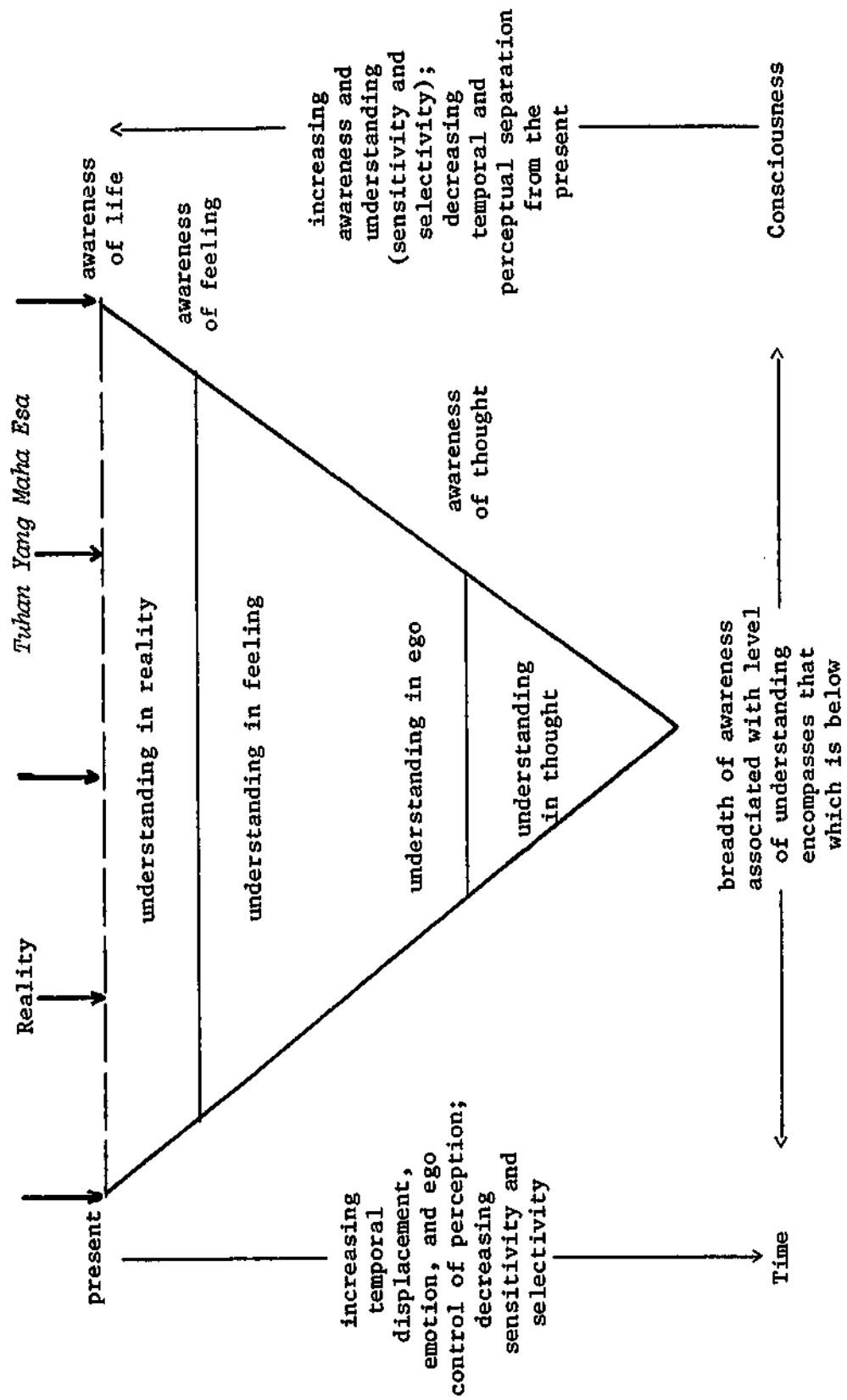
Sensitivity (awareness)

eling ing jiwa	awareness of rasa murni (life)
eling ing rasa	awareness of rasa (feeling)
eling ing pikir	awareness of thought

the informational rather than the diversional import of its rises and falls is attained. At this stage of development, the variations of affective experience come to be received as lessons connected with the process of maturation rather than being judged by the hedonistic criteria which are generally used up to this point. However, "awareness of feeling" is confined to the calmer areas of experience. Thus, when strong emotion or desire is experienced this will exceed the limits of the range of this awareness and an effort to return to this area of calm and perspective will eventually ensue when the strength of the desire or emotion has sufficiently abated. "Awareness of feeling" encompasses the *ngerti*, *ngakoni* and *ngrumangsani* levels of understanding. At this level of awareness there is contact with reality but the contact is subtly colored and distorted by the limitations of the perspective.

The third level of awareness is "awareness of life" (*eling jiwa*). *Jiwa* does not translate easily here. It refers to the whole concatenation of desires, feelings, emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations which comprise the human context of experience. "Awareness of life" is attained when the whole of experience is encompassed within an accepting and accurate state of consciousness. To use the camera analogy again, the lens is opened without the use of any of the filtering which is the defensive perceptual selection present up to this point. Whereas in the state of "awareness of feeling," the consciousness was restricted to a certain range of potential experience, "awareness of life" encompasses the whole gambit of responses. When "awareness of life" is attained, it is felt that the amount of perspective derived from this broad point of view

Figure 5. Relationships among the Developmental Continua



contains the desires, feelings and thoughts in a quiet and complete frame. This does not imply that these responses are no longer present but rather that the amount of perspective attained precludes their dominating experience. Up to this point in the stages of development, the desires are seen as containing consciousness. With the attainment of "awareness of life" the consciousness expands to encompass the desires. "Awareness of life" encompasses the *ngleng-ganani* level of understanding, and the two together comprise the active and passive aspects of *rasa murni*. *Nglengganani* is understanding which is not separated from the real situation in the present. "Awareness of life" is the direct, uncensored reception of the present situation.

Flexibility

Although consciousness is felt to become stabler gradually with time and practice, states of awareness are not seen as being vested or fixed; but, rather, they are viewed as aspects of the process of receiving reality. Situations continually arise which require new applications of the process of receiving and responding. This constant demand for expanding consciousness and the continual demand for self-criticism is compared to bathing: "So you bathe today. Does that mean that you won't have to bathe again tomorrow? It's a continual process. You keep getting dirty, so you keep needing baths. It's the same way with this." The key to facilitating this process is felt to be flexibility. Flexibility refers to the ability of sensitivity and selectivity to cooperate and work together. Increasing consciousness is felt to be a process; and, while the

process itself can by no means be circumvented or skipped over, it can be aided by familiarity, by relaxation, and by acceptance.

There are two strategies used to help in the process of adjusting and in increasing one's flexibility. The first is "studying being willing to accept criticism from anyone and anything" (*ajar gelem diélingké sapa lan apa wae*). This is initially a rather philosophical position which is used to maintain perspective; however, in time it is felt to become a habitual attitude. Understandings are felt to be limited by nature, and are constantly in the process of being contradicted by reality. The quickest way to revise and improve them is to be open to the total source of criticism which is every aspect of life. The family context is felt to be the richest source of criticism and instruction, but all other facets of life are to be viewed in this same way. Opinions are to be offered with an attitude of "Maybe I'm right, maybe I'm wrong, but this is what occurs to me." From this position, criticism is to be received as something to be resolved by reality--not by argument. Anger experienced in response to criticism of one's position is to be met by an attitude based on consciousness of one's own limitations: "Well, am I always right? Is he always wrong?"

A second practice related to acquiring flexibility in coordinating sensitivity and selectivity is related to a continuum of "willingness" (*gelem*) and "unwillingness" (*moh*). Before this practice has been initiated, the character is seen as being made up of powerful, combative elements which compete in connection with any decision. The "should" and the "shouldn't" are both represented by batteries of emotion, argument and other tools of persuasion. The problem

is seen as being that each decision in life (especially major ones) affects one's total condition; and the whole of one's experience speaks for and against it from various experiential perspectives. However, it is felt that the best perspective for adjudging and responding to any situation is in the present where the concern itself is--not sequestered among contentious memories. The first step in relaxing and opening this process to greater sensitivity to the real situation is called, "Making the unwillingness willing" (*Gelemké si moh*). For example, one might force oneself to practice relaxation; and, whether one wants to or not, one forces oneself to relax. When this is done a kind of ceasefire is imposed in the battle between the "should" and the "shouldn't" and after this has been practiced for awhile, it is felt that the emotional charge attached to this decision making process diminishes.

After this has settled down sufficiently, a second stage is entered which is described as, "Being willing to be unwilling" (*Nggelemi si moh*). This is connected with respecting and "being in the tools" (*manggon ana ing alaté*) which are connected with "unwillingness." It is felt that any decision is most properly founded in the response to the present. While the should/shouldn't argument is going on, it drowns out all but the least subtle aspects of the present condition. The first step suspends this argument and increases sensitivity and the second places attention directly in the "tools," the actual responses to experience, and works on selectivity. Being "willing" and being "unwilling" both have their foundation in experience and now in the second step, attention is placed in that response and specifically directed towards appreciating

the appropriate aspects of one's "unwillingness." Thus, in the first stage "unwillingness" to relax is simply denied, and where there is tension in the body, it is simply forced to relax. In this second stage, the informational content of the "unwillingness" emerges and an attempt is made to appreciate its significance. For example, tension which is based on an ego habit and tension which is based on an accurate response to the environment feel the same, but it is felt to be important that they be recognized accurately and distinguished. Thus, at this level this is primarily a study in selectivity and in trying to assess the real sources of responses.

The third stage is called "Willingness along with unwillingness" (*Moh wi gelem*) and its aim is to bring balance to "willingness" and "unwillingness" in their real context. This stage is connected with "separation from the tools" (*pisah karo alat*) and is felt to involve a continual study of the actual informational content and import of one's responses, which gradually become subtler and more refined. In this stage, the emphasis is both on receiving the responses themselves accurately (sensitivity) and on discerning their significance (selectivity). The body is viewed as an enormous collection of informational responses. The first two stages provide the basic method for receiving and appreciating the importance of these responses. In the third stage, this method is applied to the great undifferentiated body of information which constitutes us all and gradually subtler and subtler responses are separated out, received and understood accurately. In this stage of a person's process of development, sensitivity and selectivity are felt to learn how to cooperate and work together smoothly. Understanding becomes less

emotionally entrenched in being right; and, as a result, when it is contradicted by that which is received by sensitivity, it is quicker to accept it and receive it. Also, since selectivity is more responsive to the contradictions presented by sensitivity, sensitivity is not forced to emphasize and distort these contradictions in order that they be recognized. The process becomes more and more refined and operates more and more quickly as the understanding learns to be more closely tied to sensitivity and to experience itself.

The fourth stage of this progression is termed, "Can't be unwilling and can't be willing" (*Moh ora isa, gelem ora isa*). This development is connected with "uniting with the tools" (*manunggal karo alat*) and occurs when sensitivity and selectivity become one and are united in the real present (*rasa murni*). This is where ego ceases as a separated entity withdrawn from actual experience. This is where surrender (*sumarah*) begins. The "can't be" wording of the descriptive phrase refers to the appreciation that in surrender and unity of experience there is no longer any will, there is only the pure experience continuing on in complete attention and receptivity. Any response is a direct and spontaneous reaction to the situation, which properly contains no ego separation and hence no "willingness" or "unwillingness." This is considered to be the basis of the leadership practiced in *Sumarah*. The leadership implies this openness to reality and the information which is felt to arise spontaneously in this state. As will be discussed more fully in the section on leadership below, leadership is not connected with a person but with a relationship with reality and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.

Figure 6. The Flexibility Continuum (spontaneity)

Gelemké si moh.	Making the unwillingness willing.
Nggelemi si moh.	Being willing to be unwilling.
Moh wi gelem.	Willingness along with unwillingness.
Moh ora isa, gelem ora isa.	Can't be willing and can't be unwilling.

Sometimes this spontaneity results in responses and behavior which are clearly understood, and sometimes it results in responses which are a surprise to all present (including the leader). This is felt to be an expression of the nature of spontaneity, coupled with the limitations of understanding. Sometimes such unanticipated behavior is later clarified, and sometimes it is not. The following two incidents illustrate this. The first occurred before a meeting. The leader was sitting with those who had already arrived, talking and waiting for the rest to come. He saw one woman come in, and suddenly felt that he should take her and another woman who was already seated aside. He did this without knowing why it felt proper, and it turned out that the two women had had an argument the previous day which needed to be talked about. This was an instance in which the source of the behavior was felt to be clarified. In a second instance, the leader was going to an evening meeting with me on the back of his motorcycle. Suddenly he felt a "change" and didn't know if it was proper for him to go to the meeting or if there was something else that he should do. He stopped at another leader's house and asked an opinion. The two sat there, looking a little like hounds sniffing the rasa breeze trying to figure out what this new scent was. The source of this never became clear, and the matter was dropped unresolved. They talked for awhile, and eventually we all went on to the meeting together.

This sort of behavior is not limited to the leaders. As a person gains greater sensitivity through the Sumarah practice, a simple ethical principle is presented, "When something inside you tells you not to do something, don't do it. When nothing inside

objects, then it's all right." For example, it is felt that doing business and making a profit is all right up to the point when one's feelings let one know that it is wrong and constitutes taking advantage of the other. It is felt that this principle comes to apply to all behavior. It does not apply only to situations where there is a clear reason for the negative reaction but to all situations. For example, if one wants to visit a friend and it somehow feels wrong, one should not make the visit. Here the negative feeling may mean any number of things, one of them being that the friend is simply not home. This is the way in which it is felt that the information which is based on increased sensitivity to *rasa* and reality is tied into everyday life.

The search for a reliable mode for determining behavior is highlighted by a distinction which is drawn between proper etiquette (*tata krama*) and proper behavior (*aturan*). The former is seen as being that which observes the prescribed form in this etiquette-rich culture; however, it is felt that such socially correct behavior can be empty and inappropriate in a larger sense. Proper behavior is that which conforms to the demands of reality and is correct not in relation to some abstract schema or criterion but in relation to the real context. One example of conflict between the two codes is seen in the way that leaders behave in meetings. Proper etiquette demands proper speech, observance of levels, of tone, and of vocabulary; but it is felt that this propriety can interfere with communication and that a leader's role sometimes demands more speech flexibility and color. This is not felt to deny the appropriateness of the prescribed etiquette in some situations but to assert the

importance of letting the situation define the behavior which is required. For example, Suwondo can be raucous or refined depending on whom he is talking to and what he feels to be the demands of communication in that particular situation. As will be illustrated in a case below, proficiency in the art of communication is felt to be something acquired through experience and practice, and sometimes errors are made.

Ranks or Levels of Attainment

The descriptive use of the terms and continua outlined up to this point tends to be situationally and temporally specific. These terms are primarily used in describing a person's condition at a given time. The "understanding" half of a person's consciousness is the one generally cited in describing his condition. A person's consciousness can go up and down. During a day it might start calmly in *ngrumangsani*, and then go down into thought and *ngerti*, and then, with a moment of acceptance and contemplation, it might go back up to *ngakoni*. The consciousness that a person experiences at any given time reflects a kind of relationship between that person and that particular environment. In addition to the changes which are felt to take place over time in a linear fashion from moment to moment and situation to situation, changes are also felt to take place as the consciousness associated with a particular subject progresses through the stages of *ngerti*, *ngakoni*, *ngrumangsani*, and completes itself in *nglengganani*. A broader continuum which relates the general condition or rank of a person's development during a period of time is presented as follows.

During its history, Sumarah has gone through various periods and emphases. Nowadays, each leader is free to use whatever explanations and illustrations come to him, and there is a great deal of variation. As with the above discussion of sensitivity and selectivity, the following discussion of ranks or levels of attainment is somewhat peculiar to Central Java. It comes from Suhardo, one of the founders, however, and is generally known and frequently referred to. This is a depiction of the stages of development undergone on the path to total surrender. The first stage or rank (*martabat*) is that of intellectual "intention" (*niyat*), which is an understanding in thought (*ngerti*) to open oneself to reality and to accept one's being as it is. This is the very first step at the beginning of the practice of Sumarah. With training and practice this intention becomes firmer and the understanding expands to include the ego (*ngakoni*). At this stage, the more unified intention becomes a "resolve" (*tekad*). "Resolve" is still an expression of the ego, although the ego has become more unified and confident of its purpose. As this resolve deepens and becomes more accepting and less founded on ego desire, another stage is entered. It is here that the walls of ego are lowered and interaction with reality begins. It is here as well that the real practice of Sumarah is felt to start. This rank or stage is called *iman*, which means "conviction" or "faith," and it is sub-divided into three levels. The first is "young or immature faith" (*iman muda*), which is described as a centering of awareness in the heart area which is accompanied by a kind of chill or cool feeling. In this stage the willingness to open to and receive reality is present but not yet actualized. The second level

is "mature faith" (*iman dewasa*). In this stage the consciousness of reality progresses to the point of experiencing a strong and comforting force or power which is the first uncensored reception of reality and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa although it is still in a rather crude and undifferentiated form. This is described as a self-evident visual and physical glow. The third level of *iman* is "true faith" (*iman bulat*), which is the final stage wherein the ego is still present. This area is characterized by stability and calm acceptance, and is firmly in "awareness of feeling." This stability is felt to have the effect of facilitating the release of the repressed experiential and sensory information which was formerly occluded by ego activity. In this it corresponds to the third stage (willingness along with unwillingness) of the process of increasing flexibility. It is felt that the occluded senses produce energy and that an active ego appropriates that energy and applies it to its own purposes. With the advent of stability and the quieting of the ego processes, these subtle sources of information gradually have their energy returned to them and are able to open up again. This is where the "true teacher" (*guru sejati*) becomes evident, and it is at this point that the task of conforming to "natural law" (*purba wasesa*) begins in earnest as a moment-to-moment occupation. It is here that the reception of reality is felt to assume an active rather than a passive aspect as one learns how to receive the demands of reality cleanly and in the present. It is felt to take time to attain the consciousness necessary to truly surrender, and this is what takes place during "true faith."

After the levels of faith (*iman*) wherein ego processes are increasingly refined, stabilized and relaxed, come the levels of surrender (*sumarah*) wherein ego processes are transcended and direct congress with reality is attained. In the first level of surrender (*sumarah I*) direct awareness of *rasa murni* is said to be realized. Consciousness joins with this border with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa and an expansive, engulfing experience is said to accompany it. It is in surrender that the will of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa is said to be experienced and carried out directly. The "true teacher" is transcended and comes within consciousness. In the higher levels of surrender, more and more direct contact with being and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa is experienced, and awareness goes beyond *rasa murni* and "awareness of life" to a fourth level of awareness which is called "true" or "pure awareness" (*sejatining eling*). However, these levels are not depicted, and effective description without experience is felt to be impossible. During the early part of the history of the Sumarah organization, rank was observed quite formally and the mature members met separately from the new members. Nowadays all meetings except the leader training meeting are open; and, while rank is quietly observed, it is no longer emphasized.

Another conceptual frame to which the levels of attainment are related is the Javanese notion of "chakra." There are three chakra (*triloka*) referred to in this practice, which are sometimes called by their Sufi (arabic) names but more commonly by their Hindu-connected Javanese names. The first is the lower chakra center, which is in the lower abdomen and genital region of the body. In Arabic this is the *bait al muqaddas*, and in Javanese it is called

the *janaloka*. This chakra is felt to be the source of the energy connected with the "resolve" (*tekad*) stage of development and thus especially with "will."

The middle chakra center is in the heart area, and is called *bait al muharam* in Arabic and *hendraloka* in Javanese. This is the center which is connected with rasa and the "faith" (*iman*) stage of development. This is the source of sensitivity, and the Sumarah practice per se is sometimes said to begin only when this stage is attained.

The upper chakra center is in the head, and is called *bait al makmur* in Arabic and *guruloka* in Javanese. This is the center where sensitivity and selectivity meet and is connected with the surrender stage of development.

The process of development is felt to be cumulative. It is felt to be a process of cleansing or clearing the accumulated unreleased experiential material out of these energy channels and opening them up. To some extent, one must have cleared the lower center before moving on to the heart chakra. However, what is strongly stated is that one must be careful not to force the "surrender" stage because this can be dangerous. It is felt that as a chakra center becomes cleansed, the spirit and life energy move up into it on their own. It is felt that forcing this process can generate a great deal of pain and confusion. This is especially true concerning the head center. When the life energy is forced up, it might be said to shine through the dirt on the window as well as the window itself, and in the head chakra this can be devastating.

Figure 7. Ranks or Levels of Attainment

niyat	intention (intellectual)
tekad	resolve (ego)
iman muda	young faith
iman dewasa	mature faith
iman bulat	true faith
sumarah I	surrender I

Chakra (triloka)

English	Javanese	Arabic	Association
lower chakra (genital)	janaloka	bait al muqaddas	resolve
middle chakra (heart)	hendraloka	bait al muharam	faith
upper chakra (head)	guruloka	bait al makmur	surrender

Consciousness Maintenance Tactics

There are a number of consciousness-assisting or consciousness-maintenance tactics commonly used in the Sumarah practice. These procedures are used to pull one out of distractions and disturbances to the daily meditation and to assist in attaining more accepting and open reception of reality from moment to moment.

The first of these is based on the Javanese understanding of breathing. It is felt that the process of breathing provides an excellent monitor on the body's activities when attention is paid to it. This orientation is presented as follows:

The levels of breathing are *napas*, *anapas*, *tan-napas*, and *nupus*. In *napas* the breathing is still coarse and unregulated. In *anapas* it is a little more refined but actually still pretty coarse. When you get to *tan-napas* it is starting to get refined, and then comes *nupus*. *Napas*, *anapas*, *tan-napas*, and *nupus* are connected with the working of the heart and lungs. When the breathing is coarse, the working of the lungs is unregulated, the heart beat is too heavy and the circulation of the blood is rapid and unregulated. Everything is working in excess. But if this can be relaxed, if the nerves can be relaxed, the heart isn't forced to work so hard and you actually have more endurance. But when the heart is forced to beat heavily, as when you get mad and the heart pounds, you will get fatigued fast. This is usually not paid attention to. (Keratonan 4/10/80)

The mode of applying this appreciation to Sumarah practice is quite simple. Direct, continual attention to and refinement of breathing is advocated but not stressed. What is stressed is the use of breathing to regulate and control sharp emotional responses. This method is described as follows:

Actually the sexual desire that comes out like that is basically a desire, and all desires use up energy. The amount of energy generated depends on the--what's that called--the oxygen. When the use of oxygen is moderate it's no problem. But when the combustion gets excessive in supplying the call for energy, that causes the heart to beat faster and influences body heat. At the same time it changes and strengthens the desire. Because

of that, when you want to lessen a desire, exhale completely: do that in order to balance the energy and the desire so that it's not too strong. (Grogol 6/1/79: 203)

This method is sometimes illustrated by a leader feigning anger and, in doing so, automatically taking in a deep breath and holding it. Then he tries to maintain his anger while breathing out completely, attempting to show that the two cannot easily coexist. If there is anger, it is an ego perspective and must be supported by ego-manufactured energy. When one relaxes the anger will quickly pass, in that it cannot support itself.

Another common tactic used is repeating the word "Allah." Mantras, as such, are not used in Sumarah practice; however "Allah" is a word often called out by the leader in a meditation. It is felt to contain energy and associations which assist in the acceptance and reception of reality in the meditation, and helps to pull people out of their self-centered frames of consciousness. This device is also used outside of the special meditation setting when something disturbs one's daily meditation. It can be said aloud or silently.

Yet another tactic used is stopping to check one's disposition and the sources of one's actions and desires at a given moment. This is especially advocated during conversations, and particularly for those who tend to get emotionally involved in talking. The pause is to be used to note the emotion and to try to calm it down.

Another tactic is a kind of prayer for guidance during difficult or indecisive moments. The prayers generally have a form like, "What would it be best for me to do?" (*Kathahipun kula kados pundi?*) or "What is Thy will?" (*Panjenengan kersa menopo?*). This is felt to be a powerful tool in opening to and receiving one's situation

accurately and receiving it in proper perspective; and in this openness an answer is generally felt to arise (though it is sometimes said to take a long time).

Another tactic which is especially advocated in situations wherein someone does something which seems silly or contemptible is a pause followed by focus on the concept of "respect" (*kurmat* or *hormat*). This concept has a number of different levels and aspects. The first and most pragmatic is that the open reception of any situation presupposes a position of respect. This is considered to be a mechanical aspect of the process of reception. For example, when one is listening to someone talk and one does not agree with what is said or finds it simplistic, the tendency is to pull back from the situation and either prepare a rebuttal or simply ignore what is said. The Sumarah position is that being in the present takes precedence over such discomfort, and that being in the present requires the acceptance of all that cohabits the present with one. Thus, reception is felt to require respect, and the scornful denial of a person or thing's right to exist is seen as impoverishing one's own experience by blocking out that aspect of reality and is also seen as senseless because the denied entity does in fact exist. This is admitted to be hard sometimes; however, a related point is that any program of change can be responsible only if it is based not on a denial of elements present in reality but on its full reception.

A deeper level of the concept of respect is related to *tepa slira*. From this perspective it is felt that all human beings are fundamentally alike and that all infants start off in the same basic, wide-open condition of *rasa murni*. Life changes this initial state,

but a measure of commonality is expressed in the appreciation that an experience which has a given affect on A would probably have had a similar affect on B. Thus, while it may be difficult to respect a person at a particular time in his life, it is impossible not to respect the *rasa murni* condition of the infant who underlies that person and is attempting to cope with his experience and return to an open state.

A still deeper level of the concept of respect is related to the "true teacher." The true teacher is felt to be at the base of all our experiences and to be the personal representation of the totality of nature which is Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. Thus, at our most profound level we are all viewed as being a part of the divine. In the story about Bima's search for the waters of eternal life cited above, when Bima encounters Dewaruci (the true teacher) and discovers who Dewaruci is, he speaks with him using High Javanese (*krama inggil*). This is the only character in the entire epic who is thus addressed and granted such respect by Bima. In Sumarah practice, this deep feeling of respect is viewed as being required for everyone's inner nature because, whether they are aware of it or not, everyone has a true teacher active within and their experience demands this respect in order for their condition to be received fully. This humble respect applies just as strongly to one's own inner being. One's own inner being exists beyond one's ego in the same sense as anyone else's.

CHAPTER 9

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND PRACTICE

Principles

The motivation felt to underlie the practice of leadership in Sumarah is gratitude--gratitude for existence. Leadership is an attempt to give service which is in accord with the demands of Reality, the Will of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. It is felt that the role of leader is not something that anyone can meaningfully say he can fill. This appreciation comes from the feeling that proper leadership is a spontaneous response. It is based on an open reception of reality and requires the suspension of the ego. Thus, an experience commonly reported by leaders is being able to respond effectively to questions and demonstrate knowledge which is outside of their ken, "I can't do anything. The one who guides is not me." One way that this is viewed is by saying that there is really only one guide (*panong*), who simply uses the bodies surrendered to this service. One result connected with this is a surprising consistency in the responses to a question by different guides. In one instance, three different guides (who had not seen each other) were visited in the course of a day and gave substantially the same response to a question, down to details. However, in a deeper sense, the guide is not seen to function as a person but as a relationship with reality. This open and accepting relationship and the perspective that comes from it is common to all guides when they practice

properly. Leadership in Sumarah is an intuitive practice but, as will be seen below, it is intuition raised to the precision and rigor of a science.

The cosmos within which this leadership is practiced is felt to be a tightly interconnected entity which is Tuhan Yang Maha Esa in its entirety. Each of us is a microcosmic receptor and participant in the macrocosmos. In Sumarah, this is not presented as a philosophical tidbit but as the applied basis of the leadership practice.

At the crudest level, this macro/micro identity is felt to be demonstrated in the practical absence of barriers or boundaries between the experiences of each of us. The ego perspective is felt to cloud or distort the reception of reality by imposing order and definition on it from within. The extent of this distortion is related to the amount of control exercised on perception; that is, on the intensity and duration of the emotions and on the rigidity of the thoughts. When this distortion, which the ego carries around with it rather like a shell, is dissipated by relaxation and acceptance, more of the real situation is perceptually allowed to enter. With extended practice and the attainment of the open neutrality of faith in regarding the world, it is felt that great bodies of previously occluded information become available. One type of information which this includes is that concerning the emotional "shells" of other people. This is what is termed empathy in Western psychology; however, the concept is much more fully developed in Sumarah than it is in Western thought. On the most superficial level, people exchange emotion all the time. When people meet, their combined

conditions define the nature of the energy exchanged between them. If one person is angry, the other receives a destructive and disruptive energy. If the two people are in romantic love, they impart and receive a glow of energy. Contacts between people range between these two poles and every relationship produces one of some sort as the two (or more) perspectives combine. Emotion can act either as a weapon or a support. The effects of such exchanges tend to be subtle but can be obvious. For example, a person with strong anger can influence and disrupt another's experience markedly. The wash of emotion automatically engenders a defensive response in the other, which can be a simple return of the emotion. However, this disruptive effect is by no means limited to the negative side of emotion. A strong positive emotion also influences the other and disrupts his or her experience. While this disruption is apt to be relatively pleasant, the Javanese take the position that in either the positive or the negative aspect, these exchanges are an imposition on the other and are to be avoided. As consciousness increases, more and more of this emotional environment is felt to be received. However, sorting out the source of a particular response, whether it comes from the ego, the unconscious or from outside, is felt to be very difficult until the "true faith" (*iman bulat*) level of attainment is reached. With "true faith" the ego has calmed, learned acceptance, learned not to take sides in experience, and achieved a broad, stable perspective. As a consequence, the situation becomes simpler. The ability to guide is said to start at this point.

The levels of exchange focused on in Sumarah leadership training are based on a principle of emotional and experiential

"contagion" which they feel to have been extensively tested in practice. The basic technique is to "clear" your "tools of reception" by going into a relaxed, neutral meditation. One then focuses attention on the person being "checked" (*cocokan*), and then one returns one's attention to one's own condition to see what changes have taken place during this process. It is felt that a great deal can be picked up this way, ranging from crude emotional empathy down to receptions of considerable detail. However, the emphasis is on receiving the condition of the individual's general experience and focuses on where that experience is blocked in some fashion by tension or misdirected (i.e., unrelaxed) energy. In essence, this technique supposes that any experience which is being construed in a way which does not match with the real experience itself, determines tension based on the discrepancy between the real and the contrived perspective. This tension is founded on defensive perceptual selection and is expressed in thought, in feelings and in the body itself. The idea is to find and release this tension and to change the attitudes and perceptual manipulation by which it is supported and maintained. This is felt to be a rather subtle operation in which the person's situation and level of attainment determine the specific character of the guide's response. In general, however, the emphasis is on developing consciousness, consciousness of one's condition in as broad a sense as can be managed and consciousness of influences on that condition. In the following instance, Suwondo expresses some of this theory while asking another guide to check his condition:

Would you check the condition of my body now? [Answer from the other guide: "Not pleasant."] This is an influence too. "The influence of what?" you may ask. I had *saté* [shishkabob

with a peanut sauce] for lunch and that can influence your physical condition too. *Saté* has an effect on you. Just about everything has an effect of some kind and you have to keep track of what influences your condition. (Keratonan 4/3/80)

With practice and the development of sensitivity it is felt to be quite easy to receive the sort of information received in checking though it may not be very clearly understood. However, this is only the first step in becoming a guide. This capacity becomes possible before the ego has been released, but the bulk of training is devoted to developing communication--external communication with the group being guided and internal communication with the guide's own inner nature (the "true teacher") and through this with reality itself (Tuhan Yang Maha Esa). This is felt to be the most demanding aspect of guiding.

There are a number of levels of external contact and communication which must be kept open in guiding. The first is the maintenance of a constant, open reception of the situation and the group being guided. When one is guiding, the personal meditation is surrendered. A personal meditation would involve separating attention from the group. This practice is described as "becoming one with the situation," and is strongly advocated in any situation where communication is important and especially in teaching of any kind. It is felt that this allows greater sensitivity to the reception of one's presentation and that this continual feedback from the audience helps to mold one's message to their ability to receive it.

Another level of external communication contrasts the verbal or overt message and the contact which takes place on the level of *rasa*. As well as being able to receive the condition of individuals

or groups with rasa, the tool of rasa is also felt to provide another channel for contact and communication. This is not done with emotional manipulation but, in essence, through the exercise of an absence of support or opposition. For example, this is often described in terms of anger. When a person is angry, the anger is an emotional attack on his environment. The normal, automatic response is a defense of some sort in responding to the impinging energy. This can involve returning the anger or various kinds of avoidance or surrender to it (often involving fear). It is felt that the angry relationship which grows out of this contact is colored and distorted by it whether the response be with confrontation, with fear or whatever. This relationship itself then acts to support and justify the anger by giving it a kind of "sounding board." It is a pleasure to the inflamed ego to feel "right" and to use the energy of the anger to justify itself or to prove its point. However, the way such emotional projection is handled in guiding is by simply and accurately receiving it. The emotion goes straight through, and it is felt that opposing it in any fashion hinders its release. This can be very painful for the guide, but it is the best and quickest way to release the energy associated with any emotion. This method applies to emotion of any kind or intensity. Contact with strong emotion in this fashion is one of the ways in which a guide is able to mature. The way the process aids in maturation is felt to be that as it goes through, the emotion exposes areas which are not "clean" and in which there is unreleased material in the guide. This takes place in that these unreleased areas give automatic opposition or support as the emotion passes and the guide is drawn out of open reception.

In guiding the emphasis is on remaining openly receptive and on communication which arises out of this openness using either words or *rasa* as a medium. It is felt that guiding cannot properly be based on a pre-formulated strategy or plan of presentation. The group itself at the particular time determines its own message; and, while a guide can sometimes be sharp to the point of prescience, at other times the same guide may not communicate clearly. It is felt that a lack of clarity can reflect two things. First, it may be that the guide is not mature enough to be able to explain the particular problem. A second possibility, however, reveals one of the emphases of this practice. A guide will often respond to a question by saying, "I can't tell you, it wouldn't be proper. You must see that for yourself" or "How does it seem to you?" For example, one woman who was considering getting pregnant separately asked two guides if it was right for her to do that. Both responded that it would not be proper for them to advise her and that she must arrive at her decision herself. The leadership position in Sumarah is termed "guide" (*pamong*) in order to emphasize the person's role as a servant to the consciousness of the participants in the meeting (but not necessarily to their egos). This sometimes is felt to demand this sort of evasion, and sometimes is associated with giving criticism which is extremely sharp. However, it is not felt that the guide can properly pronounce the responses based on his sensitivity in oracular fashion but rather that his role is to aid in imparting awareness by inducing self-criticism. This is the criterion of the effectiveness of external communication.

The guide expresses the Sumarah method in such form as is

determined by his own capacity, the group, and the situation in a broader sense. Thus, a great deal of variation is apparent in style and form between areas. This reflects the appreciation that the demands of communicating the content determine the form used. I did not have much contact with guides from outside the Central Java area; but, from what I saw of Sumarah guides from Jakarta, I was surprised by their almost rude directness. This contrasts sharply with the quiet refinement of Central Javanese culture in general and with the often gentle fashion in which Central Javanese guides work in particular. However, the crudeness does somehow seem very appropriate to the modern, Westernizing context of Jakarta. One guide from Jakarta visited a Solo meeting and described himself as being direct and rough-edged (he was indeed), and described his techniques as follows:

I just tell them, "If you don't believe, don't bother coming." I don't worry about etiquette, I just clobber them, "Brother, you're just here trying to amuse yourself." When we meditate we have no mother, father, or children but only Tuhan to relate to. (Tipes 4/10/80)

The Solonese were respectfully aghast at this presentation, and the meeting broke up early.

The second kind of communication which a guide must attend to is internal communication. Just as the thought and emotion of ego cloud and distort the reception of the world outside, so too do they distort and prevent the reception of the microcosmos within. It is felt that the body is a mysterious, complete receptor of reality. That which consciousness is able to receive and recognize is seen as the external world. The rest passes through unnoted and registers within in the fullness of nature. It is felt that the universe that

opens within is far more complete than the universe which can be received with the five senses. Information of many kinds is felt to be accessible in it. This is the basis for the unanticipated comments which come out in guiding. However, other types of information are also referred to. Suhardo is felt to be the most experienced practitioner of this aspect of the practice. In part this is simply because he has been doing it since 1935 and these experiences take a while to sort out. One thing that Suhardo talks about is the ability to feel the state of individuals or groups of people. It is felt that places and cities in particular have their own "feel" or atmosphere. Suhardo talks about "going to" and receiving within the feeling of cities such as New York, Jakarta, Tokyo and Solo and then comparing and seeing the subtle and not so subtle differences that these various agglomerated gatherings of human consciousness possess. He also says that one can receive individuals in this fashion. It is possible to receive support by contacting a guide, though it is felt that it can be hard on the guide if it is done too much. I was also advised that when I wished to visit Suhardo, I should contact within to see if he was home. He was always home when I stopped by.

It is felt that the reception of the microcosmos is in rasa. Some of it is separated off by "selection" and received consciously, but the bulk of it passes through and is experienced as the "feeling" context of experience. It is felt that it is in rasa that internal and external experience interface--where the world within and the world outside meet. Guiding demands that communication be kept open in both directions and that rasa be clean and clear. The primary

contact of our being with the fullness of reality (Tuhan Yang Maha Esa) is compared to the moon reflecting the sun's rays. The experience is derived, but it is pure and direct. All other human activity and perspective take place within this direct state of surrender and are enclosed by its purposes. This is the realm of the "true teacher," and the actual voice of this unsullied reception of reality is called *hakiki*. *Hakiki* is felt to express the perspective and the will of this total point of view. It is felt that the spontaneous responses of the guides are *hakiki*. The Sumarah organization was founded as a result of the reception of *hakiki* by Sukinohartono in 1935. However, it is felt that *hakiki* has not changed. *Hakiki* which arises now is an expression of the same state of ego surrender that it was then. This is felt to give continuity to Sumarah and to give it the power to compare and grow with the many experiences of the guides. Joking reference is frequently made to the problem of learning to differentiate *hakiki* from *hakiku*, which might be respectively translated as "revelation" and "my-velation." In *hakiki* the tone and character of the voice do not change as they do in some other groups which practice a similar technique. *Hakiki* is felt to be very instructive both to the questioner and to the guide himself. Cleansing and clearing the internal and external levels of communication so that *hakiki* can flow unimpeded is felt to be a demanding job. This is especially true when a guide first starts. The following is a meditation guided by Suwondo at the guide-training meeting. In it he talks about guiding and also shows how the theory which was outlined in the last section is presented:

So before you guide, I suggest that you do as complete a meditation as you can. Don't make up a strategy like, "Later I'm going to do this, this and this." Don't. This would not be coming spontaneously. The explanations that actually do come out are of various kinds. It depends on the situation there at the time. So the way to do it is to try to unite yourself, to make yourself one with the atmosphere there, the situation at that place and time. If you are not used to it, if you are not yet used to this spontaneous flow, then before you start you should get ready as best you can. When I first started, and would be guiding a meeting at such-and-such a time, I would be trying to get myself clean and ready for two hours beforehand. So I would question myself, meaning that I would try to accept that I can't do anything. What is the proof that I can't do anything? You ask. You try to get close to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. "How about it Tuhan? What is Thy will for this gathering? What should I do? Later, when there is a question I can answer--something I have already experienced myself--then I already have some idea of how to respond. But then if there is a question which I don't know and have never experienced myself then won't I force an answer? I will try not to get puffed up. Will the answers to the questions come or not, though? If I am to answer these questions, I humbly request your will concerning them and I request your protective shelter. How about it, then? What am I to do?" For example, something I experienced the other day at Batu when Pak Mur asked me something. I didn't know. I didn't understand the question, and I didn't know how to answer it. At that time I didn't know, but then later--to use the terms of today's science--it was as if this body were a computer. The data enters and then when the data has been processed, an answer comes out. It's not I that produces the answer, though. So sometimes the process just continues on its own. Later that day at Pak Nardo's place the answer to Pak Mur's question just came out. It was as if the question that Pak Mur had asked was answered by itself, without my participation. It was not I who answered it. I couldn't try to find the answer that was asked for because I didn't even understand the question. I didn't understand it in the first place; my understanding of the question came along with the answer. I had just continued on. I didn't have any lingering attention on the question that had puzzled me. It just happens like that. It's like that when you move close to Tuhan. We ask Tuhan, "What then, what must I do?" This is the kind of experience you receive when you can do that. Our elders used to say that this was, "Thought arising from the will of Tuhan." (Keratonan no date a, ca. 1977)

Why does a person become a guide? What are the positive and negative aspects of this practice? The following meditation comes from the training meeting, and in it Suwondo discusses the

use of devoting the hours and hours of time which some people give to guiding and looks at its benefits and drawbacks:

Don't rush it.

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . .

Don't work too hard at it. Just go with it. Just follow the process. Follow the process of your rasa. Give your attention to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. By Tuhan I mean the laws of nature, not just the name, but the laws of nature. Because this is a very important aspect of trying to achieve unity of your tools and yourself. I won't go into this in depth now; but, in brief, the method for bringing harmony to your tools is found in daily meditation, and it is being self-critical. The meaning of this is not just to watch your manners. As it is said in the *Sesanggeman* [Aims of Sumarah], we should practice proper behavior both in the world and within ourselves in our acts, our words, and in our thoughts. That's what's hard. The inner aspect. But then later there comes another development within. Later there is another level in which not just the thoughts are observed but the emotions too. Then you see that these emotions are caused by your old attitudes--your bad habits. The tool which arises to observe them is your intention. The attention of your intention to face reality will change your attitudes, but you can't change your attitudes without following the process. What is meant by process here is letting it work itself out naturally. One of the things which is a part of this process is special meditation. While you are in special meditation, you can find out which of your tools have not conformed, by giving service; that is by guiding. The problem is that when you just harmonize your tools within you, you can find yourself quietly holding onto some old attitudes and feelings without realizing it. Thus, our elders used to say that even though your desires are still strong, you should do some bad guiding precisely to find out about your desires in the act. This means, to put it in more modern terms, when you guide you have to use energy or strength. So when your energy is used to guide, your strength decreases and as the energy gets less the desires also get less. Our elders used to call the desires the "desires of air" [*hawa napsu*]. The reason that they were figured to be the "desires of air" was that they could be set in motion if they were pushed by air--that is, by breathing. In connection with that there are levels of breathing: napas, anapas, tan-napas, and nupus. So when the air you take in, when your breathing is refined, this in itself guarantees that your desires will also be refined in connection with the energy which comes out of the refined breathing. When your breathing is crude, then your desires will be crude too. Your desires will be crude and this will be connected with your heart working too hard. When you guide there are two aspects which are important. From your own point of view, when you guide you can receive new experiences. That's because when you guide you will find that

many of the experiences are outside your ken before you experience them. Sometimes you get a question that you don't know how to answer and don't have a clue about but then the answer just comes by itself. Like the other day there was a question that I hadn't the slightest idea of how to answer but, in fact, suddenly it just came out. When you experience that it will show you clearly why we say that the one who is guiding isn't the person himself. Like the other day there were lots of questions which were outside my knowledge, and the responses and explanations that I gave were also new to me. So I received a lot of knowledge from the answers that were coming out of my mouth which I didn't have before.

The important thing, though, is to have a firm grip on your meditation. Because meditation has various levels: "worship in thought" or "awareness of thought," then "worship in feeling" or "awareness of feeling," then "worship in life" or "awareness of life," then "true worship" or "true awareness," which is existence itself. These levels are something which we can't explain if you haven't yet received your own experience of them. Other guides can only act as witnesses. But sometimes a guide is given a powerful experience in receiving something in his role as a guide which is a level or two, depending on Tuhan alone, above his own level of attainment. This is not his own rank which is suddenly elevated but is only given as an experience in the higher orders of existence. So lots of things can happen when you are guiding which show that, "It's not me who is guiding."

Lots of the knowledge and experiences in guiding become the teachers of the guide himself in advancing his consciousness and level of attainment. It's like, for example, a knife that you have sharpened; if you don't use it, it will get covered with rust and lose its edge. Or it's like a badminton player who has stopped training and practicing regularly. He may feel like he is still sharp, but when it comes time for a match he will soon see that he is not.

Lots of people don't see it that way, though; and many people who study Sumarah study it for themselves alone and have not yet dedicated themselves to giving service to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. The fact is that the service is not directly to Tuhan but direct by way of nature's creatures. Looking at this another way, our elders used to say that, "All deeds, words and thoughts are service to Tuhan by their nature." Daily tasks--earning a living, raising children and so forth--should not be considered as your own business alone. That won't do, lest it become, "I raise the children. I'm the one who makes the money. I can do this and I can do that." That's not the way it is. Thus, Existence itself gives we who live a duty:

Guard the harmony of the world.
Guard the harmony of the universe.

Thus, when you just take without giving in return, it's not proper. What this means is that true worship, true supplication, is actually giving service.

Being a guide is actually hard, it's not easy. And there's a risk. When there is need, you suffer inside and out. That's the cost. "Everything has its cost." But every bad experience has its good side too. When you truly practice, when you practice so as to be in accord with the will of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, the grace that you receive is different from that of someone who just takes it easy. This is what provides balance. "He who is diligent progresses. He who slacks off, falls behind." What will you reap when the time comes? This is the justice of nature. The harvest of your practice here will depend on how well your deeds fulfill your aspirations. No one can escape from the law of cause and effect. (Keratonan no date b, ca. 1977)

This meditation points up an aspect of the process of maturation attributed to the practice of guiding. In the original meditation in Javanese (as hopefully comes across in the translation) there was emotion apparent in the presentation. According to Sumarah understanding, this was in error. A desire to please, to be believed, to be understood, a pleasure at having the words flow out, all these are considered signs of immaturity. However, the way that these emotional attachments are ironed out is precisely by committing this kind of error so that the tendency is expressed and exposed. With practice, it is felt that, little by little, consciousness of these automatic responses arises and the emotion is released. In the following Suwondo discusses this process in referring to listening to tapes (like the one of the meditation above) which had been made a few years before:

When I listened to it again--"What's this? You mean I was still like that? What's this?" It was crude. That's what's called progress. So I myself could see that formerly I was like that because meanwhile my spirit had matured and my attitudes were different. When I played the tape again it was different. For that time it was right, but now it's not, the vibration is crude. So when I played back the tapes from three years before, the vibration seemed different because my mental attitude was different. I can't really blame myself because back then I was like that. This shows the stages of attainment. Back then I still had emotion. I still had--what do you call

it?--I was still affected by my will. It was true, yes, but true then and true now are different. (Grogol 6/1/79: 223)

Techniques

There are six techniques commonly used by guides during meetings. They are all variations on one basic theme, which is that of open receptivity, spontaneity, relaxation, and the surrender of the personal perspective to the service of others and Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. Two of these techniques have already been described, but I will briefly recapitulate and expand on what was said earlier.

The first and most fundamental of the techniques is called "guiding" (*momong*, which is the verb form of "guide" [*pamong*]). Guiding stresses "making yourself one with the situation," and is the state which a guide should properly be in throughout a meeting. In it the guide receives the situation and the group, and out of this open reception a spontaneous message arises which is attuned to the needs of communication in that context and the guide's own level of attainment. With the more experienced guides, the process of attunement can sharply distinguish responses to one person from those given to another. It is felt that this reflects the needs of communication. One questioner may best be able to receive a loud, joking sort of presentation, while another is most comfortable with reserve. This sort of flexibility is felt to be a product of time and experience. There is also a great deal of variation between guiding indifferent groups. It is felt that groups consisting of people of a generally uniform level of attainment are the easiest to guide. Groups which are markedly mixed in levels of attainment are harder to guide. Groups that are just starting are the hardest

of all from the guide's perspective. Earlier in the history of Sumarah practice, the guide would single out individuals by name and correct them directly during a meeting. This is not done now, as it is felt that it sometimes had the effect of creating an uneasy atmosphere. Personal comments are now made only when asked for. The amount of accuracy and detail felt to be potential to this technique is considerable, but this again depends on the guide. The acuity of guiding is more difficult to illustrate than it is with some of the other techniques; however, the meditations cited and especially the one below by Suhardo should give some indication of the degree of sensitivity and attunement attributed to this practice.

A second technique is called "checking" (*cocokan*). To review what was said above, "checking" is done by entering a state of neutral, relaxed meditation and then focusing attention on the questioner who has asked about his condition. The guide then redirects his own attention to his personal condition. The answer is related to the changes the guide notes in his condition. However, that which is received by the guide is not necessarily a physical sensation. It can be a word, a phrase, a feeling, or it can happen that the response itself proceeds without much ego involvement or understanding. Sometimes it is felt that a very clear and detailed picture of the other and his situation is received, as in one of the cases below. At other times no response is received at all, and this is reported. It is said that in the early years of Sumarah a guide was always expected to produce an answer of some sort. Nowadays the emphasis is on reporting honestly and accurately and not forcing a response. When it doesn't come, it doesn't come. Checking is a very commonly

used technique and, as in guiding, there is a great deal of variation in acuity, facility and apparent comfort in doing it among the various guides.

The third technique is another form of "checking." In this case, the checking is done of an experience in the past. The questioner gives a time and a day, and the guide goes through the same process as above except that the attention goes to the specified time. No particular effort is made to explain why this should obtain the desired result. However, occasional reference is made to the identical nature of the internal microcosmos and the external macrocosmos, and to the appreciation that, at any given time, consciousness is more directly affected by the limits of the ego than by any lack of available information. From this perspective, checking in the past constitutes a tapping not of personal memory but of the stored, full reception of reality at that moment. Nobody worries about it. It is not done in the future. It is felt that checking is a mechanical process and that if the time and date are mixed up, the result will not be that which is sought. When a person cannot remember the exact time or day, he is asked to "re-live" the experience, that is, to recall it in his memory. Checking in the past is the most common form of checking, and people will note down the time of remarkable experiences so that they can question a guide about them. Some of the guides use decidedly oblique methods to try to get the questioner to arrive at a realization himself rather than being told. This tactic is compared to the meanderings of the Solo River, which wanders around a great deal before emptying into the sea. At other times guides can be quite blunt and direct. This, again, is felt to depend

on the situation and the proficiency of the guide. Junior guides are often quite blunt, but with practice they seem to increase their repertoire of responses. It is felt that a young guide is very apt to be intent on finding out about the accuracy of what he receives, while the older guide is more concerned with effective communication.

A fourth technique is called "accompanying" (*panjenengan kalian kula sami*, literally, "you and I together"). Accompanying is something of a mixture of the guiding and checking techniques. In accompanying, attention is given to receiving and directing a person's meditation over a period of time. The guide tries to "make himself one" with the other's state and to assist the other with his words and his consciousness to attain a deeper consciousness or whatever experience is sought. It is felt that this is a difficult operation and that experience is especially important to the guide's performance. Not many guides are confident enough to do accompanying.

A fifth technique is called "bearing" (*nggendong*). Bearing is another shared consciousness technique which is similar in principle to accompanying. However, bearing is done with a lighter contact over a longer period of time, with a person who is ill. The intention is literally to "bear" some of the weight of the illness. It is felt that bearing can involve some symptom transfer. For example, Suwondo talks about becoming sick with fever while bearing people. Examples of all of these techniques will be found in the Training section and the Cases chapter to follow.

A sixth technique, which is less commonly used, is called "rasa shock" (*sok rasa*). This is a technique used for treating mental

illness, and I have never seen anyone but Suwondo use it. This technique seems to be an unusually intense form of "checking" in which the transfer is felt to go both ways, that is, to the patient as well as the guide. A shock of contact is described as passing from rasa to rasa, heart chakra to heart chakra. During this an exchange takes place which is sometimes of sufficient intensity to jolt the afflicted into reality. Suwondo discusses rasa shock as follows:

For patients who have mental illness this is needed because they can't really communicate. When it is needed, contact with rasa can give a shock. While a person is ill, it's as if there were a rebellion against that person before he became ill. There is something which has been repressed which the shock pressures to reveal itself. Whatever it is that has been repressed is given a shock with rasa, and then it broadcasts whatever was below consciousness. When it is finished, that area can be entered by consciousness. Before that, though, it is closed off by emotions which have not yet been channeled off. These must be channeled off first; and when the overflow decreases, whatever has been repressed can be entered by consciousness. (Grogol 6/1/79: 221)

I witnessed an application of this technique. The man was a secondary school teacher who had suffered a breakdown and still exhibited an agitated neurosis with some posturing and stiffness, and he displayed continual fear. He was emotionally closed off and isolated by his condition. After a rather prolonged and intense session of rasa shock with Suwondo, he was still stiff and frightened; but they seemed to be direct, honest responses, and he seemed to have been drawn out of his dream world for a time.

Training

The process of training a guide can be roughly divided into three stages. In the first stage a person who comes to the regular meetings is felt to display interest, application and talent.

Gradually the guide begins to advise him to try to follow along closely, receive the proceedings in rasa, and to try to parallel the actions of the guide internally. There will be an instance of this in the first example below.

The second stage comes when the person is felt to have displayed the necessary commitment and maturity and he is invited to attend the weekly training meetings which are devoted to guiding problems and practice. In this meeting, the problems and experiences of guides are discussed, and advanced theory is presented and its application considered and illustrated in experience. The training meeting is large. There are generally between forty and fifty participants, many of whom are already practicing guides in the Surakarta area. Many come considerable distances to the meeting on their motorcycles (up to fifty miles). All of the municipal-level Sumarah organizations in the Surakarta district are represented, and organizational matters are also covered in this meeting. The bulk of the meeting is devoted to the training. Sometimes junior guides are asked to lead meditations or to answer questions and their performance is evaluated by the senior guides. A certain amount of supervisory control is maintained on the practice of guides. One guide was suspended for teaching pushing energy upwards. This was the danger that was described above in the consideration of the chakra. Some of the regular meetings are sometimes very rich in guides-in-training and the more intimate setting makes more supervised practice of the various techniques possible (as in the first two examples below).

The third stage starts when a guide is advised to start taking responsibility. This is usually supervised guiding at first, as in

the training meetings; but eventually the junior guide is expected to be available to substitute for a regular guide when he is unable to cover a scheduled meeting. The first time that this happens is always a notable, if not traumatic, experience for the young guide. In time a meeting is started in which the new guide practices, sometimes with observation, sometimes without. Often this meeting is held in the guide's own house. This is felt to be a big transition, in that the guiding itself then becomes the new guide's primary teacher and the training meeting becomes a forum for checking and comparing notes about the various experiences that guides have had.

Throughout the training, the person studying this practice is constantly advised to try to receive the guide accurately and to feel free to question and criticize the guide's perspective. This is especially true in checking, where this feedback is felt to be crucial in helping the guide to attune and receive more clearly. However, error is felt to be possible at any stage of development and mutual observation is felt to be fundamental to the maturation of the group as a whole and of the individual members.

Supervised checking can be initiated by the guide or by the participants who are in training. In the following example, which comes from a regular meeting, Suwondo starts by asking that his condition be accompanied while he is guiding. Individual experiences are then discussed, and he also urges one member to start participating more actively in the training:

Wondo: Now let's try something. This should be done generally, though. This is an exercise for those of you who have already started to take on responsibility and are putting your study into practice in some way. Check the explanation coming out of Wondo, try to accompany it as fully as you can. Where does

it come across clearest? How is it expressed? Using what means of communication? How is the ego? Is it quiet or not? How about Wondo's character, how is that? How is his thought activity? All right, let's hear your comments. If there was something wrong, please say so. When it's wrong, it's wrong. Study being honest. If it was all right, just say so. This is for our study.

Bambang (a young man in training): On that I didn't receive much. There didn't seem to be a contact.

Wondo: Try to follow the situation fully. Don't just follow the words of the explanation.

Bambang: You mean to follow the process of the meditation. And myself?

Wondo: There were various levels involved. How about you, Mariono [another guide-in-training]?

Mariono: I received the head and thoughts as being quiet, with the attention in the back but with some activity in the chest and stomach areas.

Wondo: Can you accompany yet, Wistiani [a steady participant]? When you try to accompany, meditate first and then flash on me and then let go and check the changes in your condition. After the contact, whether it was successful or not, you check what changes have taken place in your meditation. That's the way to check someone. Study this and practice it. How about you others? If you feel like it, feel free to talk about it to each other.

Widodo (in training): I received emptiness [*swaning*], but not much else; and then when you said, "All right" it was as if I woke up. I felt sleepy [*luyut*].

Wondo: Later I'll try to explain the various experiences. In large part this was right, the same as with Mariono. There are various levels of reception, but it was almost right.

(Kerten 3/10/80)

The following brief incident also took place at the same meeting.

The guide had paused at some length before responding, as follows, to a rather technical guiding question. The pause in this situation was used to try to receive the question and the situation of the questioner clearly. After the response, other participants asked to have their reception of the question checked. The citation takes up after Suwondo's pause:

(pause)

Wondo: No, don't do that.

Joko (another guide): Oh yes, thanks.

Wondo: I see what you mean, but that's not right.

Bambang: Was I receiving correctly or not?

Wondo: Yes, you were.

Paimin (another guide): How about me?

Wondo: It was better before.

Paimin: And what I received then?

Wondo: You were avoiding it. (Kerten 3/10/80)

The following incident demonstrates the principles of the technique of accompanying and the amount of sensitivity felt to be potential to this practice. It also shows clearly how intimately integrated this practice is in the lives of the participants. Suwondo was very close to his mother-in-law and to his wife's family in general. They were all involved in meditation practice, whether formally or not. Thus, as well as the close family ties characteristic of Java were these ties of mutual practice, sharing, and worship. When his mother-in-law became ill, we went to her bedside to meditate and to try to bear (*nggendong*) some of the weight of her illness. Later her condition deteriorated, and she was moved to a hospital in Yogya. Suwondo commuted the forty miles to Yogya every day on his motorcycle to be with her and to try to help. The Javanese believe that the journey of death (*perjalanan*) is a chance to return to the source of existence (Tuhan Yang Maha Esa). It is felt that this journey can be helped or hindered by circumstances and that when the time comes, the spirit must be strong enough to let go of the earthly condition and the body. This process can be aided by receiving a kind of push (*raja*) of energy, which comes from nature by means of someone able to perform the role. Suwondo found himself in a position of strong conflict in having a very strong attachment of love to his mother-in-law and at the same time receiving the responsibility to give the push that would help her on her way. The following incident of group accompanying took place at the training

meeting three days after her death. It was the most extended and profound instance of this kind that I witnessed. Suwondo was upset by the experience, and his speech was a little louder and rougher than is usual.

Now try to accompany me on an experience of mine while I relive it. This was related to guiding and specifically to the problem of separating the ego from the energy which comes from nature. This concerned my mother-in-law's death. In a situation like that there is always a contest between full acceptance and holding on.

Please try to follow.

This was my condition the other day [pause]. The body felt unpleasant, confused, worried, with a lot of attachment and self-concern. In fact, the knowledge of what was required was already there but the ego was not yet willing.

Then on Monday I went to Pak Hardo's home around noon. This was my condition at the beginning of the visit [pause]. Then I was hotly reprimanded by Pak Hardo. It was like being scolded; but in fact he was just setting me straight, forcing me to look at reality. Seeing the difference is hard sometimes. It looks like getting yelled at, but in fact it's getting set straight--having the reality of the situation pointed out to you. It depends on how you take it. This is reality, whether it fits in with what you want or not [pause].

Then we talked for a long time. It was as if I was being forced to separate my real duty from my social role. Proper behavior and proper etiquette had to be separated, separating the ego from the energy which was being given to me [pause].

Don't meditate to yourself. Don't meditate to yourself. Do the best you can, but don't go off into your own meditation. Do the best you can to open yourself so that you can receive another's experience. This is a study according to your own level of attainment.

If I was willing, it was my duty to give her the push into death [*raja*] but I wasn't willing. I still had my attachment to her. In fact, I just couldn't.

Then I was ordered just to point out her situation to her and to give her awareness of the unfortunate end of old age. This was the separation, this is where the separation came, right here. The ego and the duty separated here [pause]. I accompanied my father each evening [silence]. There had been a visible effect [silence].

Now a few days later. I was given an experience as a witness, although my ego was still unwilling. I witnessed it, but I was still not willing. My attachment to her still held fast. But the strength of the energy was constant. Within my meditation I confessed that I was attached, "Here Tuhan, I'm still holding on." But it depends on reality. So there were two realities. The first went along with the necessary natural

process. The other was the process of my ego. [silence]
 On Saturday after work I went to Yogya and stopped at Pak Hardo's again. He again told me to do it, but I still resisted, still unwilling. How could I be willing? But I had a deeper responsibility to my mother-in-law, a responsibility between her spirit and mine.

At that time I spoke to the doctor--this was important--I tried to make myself neutral while I was talking to the doctor. Try to check this. [silence] I lost track [*luyut*] but there was a force that came out by itself. I was just a channel, and my ego separated. The energy came out by itself. [silence]
 This was just steady faith. I didn't recognize it at the time. It was only later that I realized that it was firm faith.

[silence]

The crisis came on Monday evening. I visited Pak Hardo again, and he said, "If she needs it, give her a push so that it goes more quickly and smoothly." I still couldn't. I confessed, "I still can't do it, Tuhan, please, what is the best way, Tuhan?" I was just with her for a minute, and she began to let go. I left, and when I returned she was already gone.

(Keratonan 6/19/80)

During the discussion which followed this presentation, one of the guides-in-training asked if Suwondo had really been staggered by the experience. The implication was that the preceding narration seemed to show that his strength in the practice helped him to control his response.

Yes, that's how I felt. Life's like that. I was confused, scared and in pain. I wasn't pumping myself up by saying, "I must be brave." No, no. That's what my ego's reaction was, but that's the way egos are. It's not that because you are a guide you must be brave all the time, no. The process that a person who practices goes through is the same as the process that a person who doesn't goes through. It's the same. The way it is confronted is different, though. It depends on your level and the experience itself. The feeling itself is the same, though. What happens is the same, it's just the response that is different. It's the character that's different because, on the one hand, you have trained to accept and receive reality and without that training it just overwhelms you. It's not that this kind of thing is pleasant when you have prepared for it and only hurts a little bit. It's still painful, although you don't complain much. In that way it's not like when you aren't prepared for it, but the pain itself is the same.
 (Keratonan 6/19/80)

Sumarah practice is not seen as a primarily social or diversional event but as a part of the participant's life. Traditionally

in Java, much of the second half of life was devoted to such practice. It was said to be best to start a practice like Sumarah after the age of forty when one had had some experience and one's family responsibilities were diminishing. Nowadays it has become common to start at a younger age; however, the long-term, life cycle appreciation of such practice remains the same. It is something that is done either formally or informally (depending on one's inclinations) throughout middle and old age. One outgrowth of this perspective on mystic practice is its relaxed acceptance as a valued part of life, and the pervasiveness of such practice gives it an unhurried, if not today then later on, assurance. There is a marked absence of fanaticism and recruiting pressure expressed to draw participants. One reason for this is, no doubt, the government supervision under which Sumarah and all the mystic groups operate. However, two other factors are connected with the absence of fanaticism. First, tolerance is an integral part of Javanese culture in general and Javanese mysticism in particular. In light of Java's position as a crossroad for Indic, Sufi, and some Chinese strains of mysticism, as well as the indigenous versions, it is not surprising that it is generally felt to be the content (*batin*) which is primary while the particular form used to study it is seen as incidental. One way that this is expressed in Sumarah is in the *Sesanggeman* (The Aims of Sumarah) which is stated, "They vow not to be fanatical, but to rely on truth, which in the end benefits all people." This leads into the second aspect of tolerance. It is basically felt that fanaticism is an obstructive, emotional disorder which is an expression of the ego and blinds one to the accurate reception

of those aspects of reality which do not fit into one's fervor. In training, young guides are frequently warned about fanaticism.

However, this is not to say that intensity is not felt to have a proper place in Sumarah practice. Life is short, and it is felt that we sometimes need to be reminded of its transient nature. In regular meetings this urgency is not much expressed. The participants are not necessarily felt to be committed to the practice, and there is a danger of misunderstanding. However, intensity is felt to be one of the tools of communication which frequently, but not necessarily, become associated with self-serving emotion (*pamrih*). The process of freeing the tool from this influence is felt to be a long one, marked by many tainted presentations as consciousness is gradually increased through experience. In the training meeting, urgency and intensity are sometimes expressed, and this forum is considered the proper place for the study of intensity as in Suwondo's presentation above. In the following presentation, this intensity is felt to be expressed more properly and cleanly by Suhardo while guiding the training meeting. Suhardo's occasional participation in the training meetings (coming over from Yogya) seemed to be in the role of a supervisor, making sure that the fundamentals are not being lost in the details of technique. Guiding as practiced by the more gifted guides does not have a cultural parallel in the West. The crowd consciousness of some performers and politicians gives some indication of its nature, but the role of the guide is not to entertain or convince but to foster the individual consciousnesses of the members. In the following meditation, a great deal of theoretical material is applied; and it should give some idea of the amount

of attunement felt to be potential to guiding:

That's right. Don't delay it. What you need to do is to put yourself in order. Why do you practice Sumarah if you are not willing to put yourself in order? In surrendering to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa the main thing is that your physical and spiritual aspects must strive towards receiving reality.

So you must do this. It's hard, but you must do it.

To attain true faith what you need to do is stand on your own two feet. That means without a guide. When you can do that, then you can correct yourself.

You correct yourself like this, "How is my daily meditation? How can I improve it? What is the goal? What should I do so that my being will become united, and so that I will be neutral and calm?" This is what's lacking. This right here. It is not enough just to collect your confusion and bring it to a guide. This is not good because you will go quicker if you do it yourself. Therefore, with this, I give you this assignment which is to put yourself in order, to unite your physical and spiritual aspects and strive to receive being and reality. This is the main thing.

It's not that all of you are going to be able to settle into the fourth level today, the level of surrender. But you will be able to make a stride forward. For example, from the level of resolve to the level of faith or from the level of young faith to the level of true faith. Or if you have already attained true faith, you should be able to reach the fourth, which is surrender.

So in time you will attain surrender.

The most important tool for making these advances is daily meditation. If you just try to do the meditation here, without applying it in daily life, it's of no use. Actually, the true practice of Sumarah is in daily meditation and self-criticism. You must. Daily meditation without self-criticism is not possible; you must be self-critical. So every second you must direct yourself towards receiving reality. That is with awareness. Be aware of what resists this within you until you attain the complete awareness of *rasa murni*. Awareness has different levels, and not everyone is the same; but you must be able to correct your condition on your own.

What is essential for correction is your feeling [*rasa*]. Your feeling must examine within, observe within, and correct within. That is the way. Isn't that calm, calm and neutral?

But when you have reached young faith, the sign is a coolness, a chill like it's freezing inside. What then is the sign and proof of young faith? I ask that you enter into meditation because before you can realize young faith, you must be convinced of the existence of reality and being itself.

So enter now, enter your feeling, so your feeling observes itself and we enter into special meditation.

You must enter for the proof.

Keep going.

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . .

This is faith, when there's a chill as if it's freezing inside. Now enter more deeply.

Deep within there is a light. This is what's hard, this is not easy. But if you wish to receive and surrender to reality and natural law there is no other way, and then, when you have surrendered, there is a sign.

Witness the reality with feeling, understanding and awareness. Feel your feelings, consider your thoughts, receive reality. Did you receive your sign or not?

That's the proof.

There is a light within which comes from nature, and this light is the source of life. Worship is the duty of those that live, worship to unite with life. This is your duty, to unite with your being and with life itself.

If you are now receiving the light that shines within you, this light is the source of Sumarah. The revelation on September 8, 1935, came in this light.

So the revelation didn't just come to Pak Kino, who was the first, oh no. It comes to anyone who has attained faith. It must be your own faith, your own experience; it won't come from anyone else, you know.

Our surrender is directly to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, directly to being and reality itself. There is no intermediary. It's direct.

Continue with this.

It's direct.

This is a level of awareness which is very useful to those who attained contact with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. This is an important step because when you have gotten this far, you can receive and serve the will of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa directly. This is where you find *hakiki*, which is the voice of the true teacher within us all. It must be witnessed. The orders of your true teacher are here; and, in fact, the true teacher merely relays the will of natural law [*purba wasesa*] to those who are able to receive it. This is the level of attainment where the connection with being and reality is attained. But you are lacking in this; you lack this practice. Your thoughts are still active, and thinking is not allowed. That's not the way to do it.

The will of natural law permeates society totally--the orders of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. That's the way it is done. That is with faith, yes, faith. The Sumarah organization is not just dedicated to special meditation. Your daily life must, at the very least, be filled with faith. At the very least. So you look yourself, you must confront your failings. "How is my daily meditation, what are my deficiencies?" You must do that. You yourself must surrender. It's your own responsibility. It depends on you alone. It doesn't depend on the purity of someone else. That's not it. It depends on you. And that means daily meditation. Without daily meditation you cannot dedicate yourself, because if your daily meditation slips, if it gets bad like that it means that you have lost your

connection with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, your direct connection. There are no mediators. It's direct. Direct. But be careful, you must guard your connection yourself. This is what you must maintain at the very least. So, managing yourself, which can be done with thought or some other tool, will not do. You should be informed and directed by existence itself. This is not hard.

Every action, every word and every thought should come straight from reality.

If your reception of reality is right, then your thoughts about reality will be right and your behavior will be right too. But if you let go of your daily meditation, you will be punished for it by losing your connection with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. You must dedicate yourself inside and out.

Don't doubt it.

Dedicate yourself.

Practice proper behavior. Practice it. That's right, you can do it on your own.

What does that mean in your behavior?

Everything that you wish to do which is not condemned, which is not punished in your feelings, I mean inside when you are calm and receptive, that means that it is allowed. That means that it is all right.

For example, a merchant cannot survive without a profit. A merchant needs a profit.

But if the profit gets to be excessive and he's taking too much, inside he will know that he is taking advantage and that he should have some pity on the other guy.

Inside you know.

For a merchant there is a measure and a balance which comes from inside you. It weighs your actions.

That's what this meditation is for. We don't say that you must fast in this way or that, or not make money. No, that's not the way. These things are just provisions for life in this world. They're necessary for living in the world. But at the same time don't be a burden on the world, and don't get attached to these things. Don't get attached. And not just to things, either. Look at your intellect. Intellect. Your intellect is a tool for educating or giving lessons to humanity. Don't go around thinking it's the greatest thing. Ohhh! What a mistake. That's a mistake if you think like that. A mistake. When you receive your duty you will find, as I have these forty years, that the intellect is just a tool to help humanity appreciate reality.

That's the way it is.

[silence]

Keep going. This is faith here in your chest, the proof is in the experience.

You must be willing, you must dare, you must attain it. If you aren't daring enough, you don't reach it. Then faith is just a word. When it is just a word, it is nothing at all.

Continue, keep going.

Go deeper. This is faith, don't be distracted by the view.

Don't split yourself from your experience by observing it. Be

firm. Be steady in your surrender to Existence in its totality. Continue.

Go deeper so that your faith becomes true faith. True faith is a step on the path to the fourth phase, which is surrender. You must enter here.

[pause]

This just now was true faith. Later you must bring your daily meditation into true faith, as soon as you can. For those of you who are not yet able, this experience is a tool for you at your own level.

Do it! Enter into true faith.

Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . . Allah . . .

Hurry up, enter.

Allah . . . Allah . . .

Ni ni na nu na ni [a kind of tuneless, relaxed humming]

Let the vibrations enter and go with them.

Ni ni na ni nu ni nu [about five minutes]

Allah . . . Allah . . .

Let the world go. Leave your attachment to the world behind. Let your family go, until what's left is just you yourself. surrendering to your existence, you alone with Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.

Ni ni ni ni nu . . .

Go on, enter again.

This is preparation.

Don't listen to my voice, just let it enter.

This is preparation for entering the fourth phase. With this you unite your body and your spirit in surrender to Tuhan.

With this you are entering into natural law. This means that you can follow natural law only if your tools have surrendered first.

This is natural law. When you have attained this level, the sign is that your spirit and your body do not fluctuate. The body doesn't vary. This means that the physical body of the desires and the body of the spirit have become united with existence in the present.

The body and the spirit become one.

When you are totally dedicated to being one with the unity of being, you will be entered by a light. When you have attained this, a ray of light enters. This light fills you and comes out and pervades the world in its entirety, depending on the extent of your service and your level of attainment.

When that is attained, you tie into the natural law which is the universe, which is general. But first you must be able to receive the natural law of your own being.

This comes first.

This is the way.

This is the way to unite all of your tools in the here and now. When your body and your spirit are united, you become a servant awaiting the will of Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, which is expressed deep inside you.

This will is right there inside you right now.

There is no need to struggle, seeking the "true teacher," practicing neutrality, or any of that; you just follow His will.

That's enough. When you're told to go West, you go West; when you're told to go South, you go South.

That's enough.

That's because we obey the will of Tuhan, not the will of the "true teacher." The "true teacher" is just a tool for finding the will of natural law.

So don't keep relying on your understanding once you have reached this stage. Don't do that. Don't keep trying to figure it out like that. There's nothing to worry about.

It's easy.

Doing it is easy.

But the way that you do it, the form that it takes, depends on where you are. You don't have to imitate the way they practice at the headquarters in Jakarta. The situation in Jakarta and the situation in Surakarta are different; and even within the district of Surakarta, the various places are all different. That's true everywhere. You must be able to work with the circumstances where you are.

That means that if the appreciation of reality is expressed using religion, you use religion. If it is expressed using the doctrines of mysticism [*kebatinan*], you use that. However it is expressed there, you can use that medium.

You can use any medium to describe the Sumarah method and give your practice and your faith to anyone at all. You can confront anyone because your orders come from the "true teacher," that is, directly from reality itself.

There's no distinction involved in this where one person can receive his existence better than someone else. It's not that way. It can't be. There is nothing more than the fact of existence itself. There can't be.

So if you truly want to follow natural law, you should learn to practice without a teacher. That's the way to do it. That's the way it was done in the old days. Practice without a teacher. That's the way I used to do it. It depends on your resolve, your resolve in confronting your duty to reality with dedication. But who is it who acts within the realm of existence?

You all do.

We are all the creatures of Tuhan and natural law. Our physical and spiritual bodies, our very lives are the expressions of natural law, so how could you think that any of your actions could be outside the totality of being? Wrong. It's wrong if you think that.

What then? In fact, when you talk, when you eat, when you work, when you think, it is part of the totality of being which is Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.

That's what's at the core of it.

That's the essence.

Now come into daily meditation.

Daily meditation, enter daily meditation now.

Open your eyes and be right here.

CHAPTER 10

CASES

In this chapter, cases will be cited to illustrate various of the techniques described above, and also in order to show some of the applied outlook of Sumarah in relating to various issues and problems. The presentation will be divided into three sections. In the first section, the cases will illustrate variations on the theme of checking. In the second, an example will be presented which demonstrates both accompanying and bearing. The third section will present various examples of the Sumarah outlook, that is, the application of the principles to various problems and concerns.

Checking

In this section, examples will be given to illustrate the use of checking. The first is an example of checking in the past. It also discusses the process of maturation.

Bambang (young guide-in-training): At eleven o'clock this morning, how was I?

Wondo: It was related to the ones who are close to you.

Bambang: At that time there was a problem in my family; but what I want to know is if I was confronting it properly.

Wondo: For you it was right, for the time being.

Bambang: By that you mean that it wasn't right.

Wondo: No. What's right has different levels. For example, what's right for me would be wrong for Pak Hardo. It's the same thing, you know. (Keratonan 6/19/80)

The following example illustrates the detail and prescience felt to be potential in checking, and the problems it can cause. In

it, one of the regular members asks Suwondo to counsel her son who is despondent about what he says to be his rejection by a girlfriend. The Javanese tend to be very secretive about such relationships. For example, our servant had a cousin with whom she had been raised. Her cousin planned to marry a man she had been seeing for nearly a year, but she had never introduced her intended to her "sister." This is common. Young people do not talk about their boyfriends or girlfriends, and this reticence is probably partially a result of the impermanent status of such relationships. If they do not work out, it can be a source of great embarrassment in a community as tightly interconnected as the Javanese. In the case of the young man, Suwondo first gives a few seemingly standard remarks about letting it pass and not getting so involved in such relationships because it can interfere with other aspects of one's life. However, Suwondo then brings out another factor which he received in checking the young man's condition. He asks if this were not, in fact, some sort of love-triangle problem. The young man assents that it is, and then comes in for a great deal of kidding from the group about this situation. Suwondo seems quite pleased (improperly by Sumarah standards) to have received this information in checking. He gloats about it a bit, which further offends and hurts the young man. The young man left abruptly. Suwondo then goes on to discuss the process of reception in checking and expresses regret for his insensitivity in handling the situation (this was repeated a number of times in the weeks that followed). He then talked about the importance of experience in developing proficiency in the fine art of handling such situations and gives himself a rather poor grade in this particular instance. He then goes on to give the Sumarah philosophy (according to Wondo) of male/female relationships and their

place in life. He describes marriage as having three levels. The three levels are physical marriage, marriage of feeling and marriage of the spirit. He then describes the nature of marriage in spirit and the total commitment (other as self) which this entails. He then says that the problem with a lack of such commitment is that the unfulfilled attractions to other women are a source of tension and distraction. Suwondo then returns to ask the young man's mother if she truly hadn't been aware of the situation and to lament his clumsiness in handling the problem. The meeting then moved on to another question.

Sudibiyo (young man): She's already lost, but when I was trying to win her it was intense.

Wondo: That's right. When you just let it be as it is, it passes. Like when you go to sleep, it will calm down quickly.

Sudibiyo: Quickly calm down.

Wondo: In time you will become enemies. So your love becomes anger. Look, you tried to win her. It's important now that all that just be put aside for awhile. Girlfriends are all right, but don't get so involved. That way leads to broken hearts. Just let it go. There's no need to dwell on it any more. Broken bones, broken hearts, broken . . . broken legs.

[laughter] That problem seems to have three sides though.

Sudibiyo: That's true.

Wondo: Apparently the quarry had been rather elusive, and the prey got changed. So apparently you were running around in circles. Have I found you out or not? You haven't even told your parents? [To Sudibiyo's mother:] This is what I couldn't explain before. How do you explain love problems like this? Anyway, he's been running around in circles, so now I report it to you. He hasn't told you yet, has he?

Arini (mother): No.

Wondo: Apparently the problem has only now been uncovered.

Anonymous (other member): Stealing love! [laughter]

Anonymous: How could you be so sneaky?

Wondo: You didn't know, did you? When you invited him, you didn't understand.

Arini: Not too quick to realize.

Wondo: Apparently this running around involved liking this one but her not liking him, while in the meantime another likes him but he doesn't like her. So he goes around in circles.

Anonymous: He's a person who . . .

Wondo: That's not a person, that's a schmereson.

Arini: He says that school comes first.

Wondo: Yes, that's the way it is.--So in this kind of thing we can receive vibrations and they inform the guide in inner-communication. They let me know about the problem. Then I ask about it the same way, using inner-communication. This problem is a kind

of rebellion. Here, there is something offered which is not paid attention to. Here, there is that which is sought but not attained. This is a problem of the young. [laughter]
Anonymous: Really.

Wondo: Sometimes people from the East keep this kind of thing secret. But we have a kind of radar which can pick it up. Sometimes it reveals itself. This is like using psychology; there is no need to ask because it reveals itself. Right here [chest area]. This is an art too. This knowledge can be studied. I am still not particularly proficient, but if there is a vibration and I receive it, I ask the vibration to explain itself. This is an art for which you must be clean, then you can receive these things. Nothing is said openly, but inside there is something that tells. That's what is picked up. Sometimes it is a secret. His mother wasn't told, but I found out. Sometimes when it is really top secret, I don't dare reveal it. It's not proper.

Anonymous: You don't dare?

Wondo: No, it's not right. Because then it can disturb or hurt him and he gets angry. But then I ask again, "May I reveal this openly? Will he become angry or close himself off or not?" If not, and he will just be mad for a minute, that's all right. [laughter] Embarrassed? That's all right too. But this is needed in order to change or improve him. There is indeed a risk that the anger will become hate. This can happen. But if it doesn't get to the point of being dangerous, it may be revealed. But if it's not the right time yet, it shouldn't be said.

Anonymous: As for me, it's like that.

Anonymous: Yes, that's it.

Wondo: Here, there is a wave and if its frequency has been received precisely, there is no further disturbance and it is clear that he can't lie about it.

Anonymous: But get real mad?

Wondo: No.

Anonymous: You can't lie about it?

Wondo: Yes. The reason is clear. This is just me over here. What's the real reason I can receive these vibrations like this? Sometimes, I myself don't know. I'm not 100% sure. This thing I picked up, is it true or not? But then I ask, to find out if it is real. When you ask openly, the proof is reality itself.

Hartati: Like here, behind my eyes, why was it throbbing?

Wondo: You were holding on there. . . . Holding on is all right, you know. It's like when I'm embarrassed but I want to be found out, so I hold onto it. It's true that there is a feeling of embarrassment, but it's nothing. This area [eye area] sometimes gets a shock, is given a shock--zap!

Hartati: The eyes are what get the shock. The eyes before . . .

Wondo: Yes. So with a paranoid person, you sometimes have to have exact timing--then it can be released. It has to be exact, because if it's not precisely right, it can be dangerous. Sometimes you get the timing right. But if you miss it, it can backfire on you. This is what's hard. This is the real

art. Sometimes I'm not as precise as I would like to be, because I'm still learning too. One learns from experience, and in time one gets more accurate. That's how you become proficient. But, as for me, my intension is good; but, in truth, I can't do it very well yet. But I try as best I can. Later, when he has calmed down [the young man had left], I hope that he'll see that this was something to help, not to hinder. He was going to continue to be unsettled and question: "Living like this, what's the purpose?" But it's not as if there was no goal, because there is a goal, but he has let it go and life becomes empty. Life itself is to be studied. Why is he unwilling to learn? Why doesn't he want to find out what he should do with his life? This, in fact, can be used as a stimulus, not to weaken his resolve, but as a stimulus. And your life is why you will say thanks for her rejection. You grit your teeth--like this--you grit your teeth and try--What are you? Later, if you can attain a title, proper work, try it, isn't that what you want? And you can try to attain more than her, with the grace of Tuhan. That's the way to do it--not just to get a girl and concentrate only on her and later end up quarreling. In the long run, you will surely be bored. It's like when you've just bought a new car. How you pamper and polish it! But when it gets old, you just let it go. To be sure, when it's new, you shine it and shine it when it gets dirty. It's the same with husbands and wives. If you've just become engaged, it's like wow! But when she's already your wife, it's different. It's like if you have a new car. If it's still new--wow! Wives are like that too. [laughter] So what we strive for when a couple gets married, first it's a physical marriage, then it becomes a marriage of feeling, then it becomes a marriage of the spirit. That's what it's like to be married. When you have a child--or with your own body--even if your body is ugly, it's your body--you love your body. When it's sick, you treat it. You should love your wife like your body. Even though she may look old and ugly now, you still love her. But often it's not like that. When she starts looking bad, you start looking at other women. It will kind of . . . apparently it's a kind of attraction, someone who looks pretty to you, pleasant isn't it? But, in fact, it's an agony. Imagining something beautiful like that causes suffering because it's not reality. When I found him out just now, I didn't know beforehand. I didn't know before. I wasn't thinking that, but then, suddenly, it just came to me like that. Was it true or not? But he hadn't said anything to you? [his mother]

Arini: No.

Wondo: But now you know all.

Arini: What was hidden fast is now visible.

Wondo: But he was good. He accepted and didn't fight it too much. Actually, he fought it, but he didn't reject it.

Anonymous: But you've been left behind, haven't you?

Wondo: Yes.

Anonymous: What will happen later?

Wondo: This art is like that. When his business is finished, he can go out and be spiteful. For example, if he doesn't go right away--too late, he's gone. He's already gone now. [motorcycle starts and pulls away]

Anonymous: Why did he leave so fast?

Wondo: I don't know. How about that, though. I didn't think he would go that soon. I don't know why. (Grogol 6/1/79: 209-11)

Problems of maturation in the Sumarah practice are discussed in the following two examples. If the first, Suwondo is asked to comment on a man's character, and he replies that the man is too trusting. Suwondo says that his progress would be facilitated if he would believe less and experiment more with the intention of acquiring experiences to inform his own perspective.

Martono (middle-aged member): As for me, is it that I have strong beliefs or am I just very stubborn?

Wondo: You are basically trusting, trusting by nature. You believe and you trust, but you are afraid to try things on your own. So it's like this, you already believe, so if you can, you should sort of make experiments. You should try things. If there are mistakes, that's all right. This way you will be able to have experiences.

Martono: When I do that, I get scared.

Wondo: What you lack there is just the capacity to be aware of your fear and go ahead anyway.

Martono: Unswerving.

Wondo: Your state is already good, but your deficiency is that it will take you a long time to progress. Flirt with danger a little bit every time, just don't do it too much. This way you will have experiences and you will learn from the mistakes you make. So I advise you to be a bit bolder. Later, when you make errors, all right, you'll change it. So when you receive something, ask, "What the heck is this?" and then try to pursue it. That's what's lacking. You're not pursuing things. When something hits you, you should inquire about it. Try it, try it, so that you get some experience. For example, when you hear my explanations, that's what is said, that's what is said, but how do you put it into practice? What do you have to do? So just try this and then you will get some experience. Don't just follow along. Don't just be obedient to the guides, and then you can get some experience too.

Martono: It's real hard for me to do that. Why can't I just accept it and let it happen, you know? That's what's hard.

Wondo: So your reception of reality is all right. It's already all right. But for the proof, proving to yourself whether it's true or not. You're very trusting. But being that trusting

is no good because then all you get is what other people tell you. There is more, you know. Being that trusting is no good. You can't believe so strongly. If you haven't experienced it, don't be willing to believe it first. It's no good if you do. So you say to yourself, "Okay, but I'll try it first. There is proof, but those are just words. So what is my proof? My proof is getting an experience like that but I haven't as yet." So that way you grumble but you don't block out the experience, do you? There's a difference. This way is all right, but if you say, "Later, when I die it will be revealed . . ." That's different. It's all right to believe, but then you should try, try to find proof. (Grogol 6/1/79: 222)

The following example concerns a similar problem but with a more advanced member. In this instance a meditation is checked, and then the man is told that what he was experiencing was an important state in the process of examining his character. Suwondo describes it as a condition in which ego control is suspended and unreleased material found in the unconscious can enter consciousness in an uncensored form. This occurs after most of the unconscious material which stands between consciousness and the direct reception of reality has been faced, accepted, and understood with "understanding in reality." In this the *luyut* stage of the process of assimilating unfaced experiences becomes conscious. Suwondo says that the direct reception of reality which this state allows can be the source of clairvoyant experiences.

Harno (another guide): How was I at twelve o'clock last night, Pak?

Wondo: The feeling was good. What were you examining?

Harno: Well, it's like this. Last night I was meditating when everything--I think the term is "transcended." Was this releasing transcendence in the unconscious or what? So this came out. I just went along with it and fell asleep in the chair.

Wondo: That was an explosion in the unconscious but since you were conscious of what was happening it became an expression of the unconscious. You could be aware as your good and bad experiences came out. Just let it go. Just confess to it. This is a very profound experience. In this study it's as

if you were examining yourself. Then afterward, when you have been given the material, you can see, "Oh, I was wrong, that wasn't my intention. It would have been better if my intention had been this. What must I do to correct this?" The investigation goes like that.

Harno: So this was an explosion below consciousness.

Wondo: Yes, so if you can, your intention should be to let this stuff go and not let it separate and fill up again. It's like developing a new character, but your apprehension should be reduced. What are you worried about? Let's see, what are you worried about? Why are you apprehensive? You know that being afraid is not good.

Harno: I'm afraid of losing control.

Wondo: Yes, there's fear there. When you let go, there can be fear there. But, in fact, this can change your character.

Harno: I was with Pak Sri the other day, and he said not to let things get out of control.

Wondo: It's not that you shouldn't let go, it's that you should be unwilling to let things get out of control. But they're different. Of course you are unwilling to lose control but that doesn't mean that you don't want to let go. That's the fear right there, "If that happens I won't be able to handle it, it might overwhelm me. I'm clear about where I am, but if I let go, my ego won't be there."

Harno: A lack of faith.

Wondo: Yes, Mas Wiryotanoyo got stuck there for a long time. "If I let go, then I will be gone and I won't be aware of anything." This is the expression of the ego. The comfort of the ego comes when it feels it can understand. When you let go, it generally opens a tool which is like clairvoyance, but you have to let go first. Formerly, I was very gifted at that, but nowadays I'm not. When I need it, it comes; when I don't, it doesn't. (Grogol 6/1/79: 215-16)

Accompanying and Bearing

In the following example, both accompanying and bearing are illustrated. In this instance, Dewi asks about her meditation and is told that the meditation should not just be for yourself and your own body but should be intended as a service to others. Suwondo relates this to bearing her husband and children, and describes this technique as "cradling them in your arms using rasa." She asks him to show her how this is done by accompanying her while she attempts to bear her family. After being accompanied, she complains that,

contrary to her usual experience of release and relaxation during meditation, during this one she had felt weighted down. Suwondo explains that this is the nature of bearing, it makes the body feel heavy. Another guide present then asked if there had been a feeling of heat in the experience, as he had been following along and had picked one up. Suwondo replied that there had been but that it's not always the case. The other guide clarified his question by asking if the heat was not connected to Dewi. Suwondo assented that it was, and Dewi volunteered that her children were running a fever. Suwondo remarks on an aspect of the accompanying during which he had felt "stuffed" (*seseq*) and had started doing the heavy, full exhalation exercise described above. He said that this was a result of the contact, and that she had not been helping to ease it. They then talk about the condition of the children, and Suwondo says that the contact involved in bearing is quite heavy and sustained. He says that although she had been doing meditation for her children's benefit, the meditation had involved too little contact to be of use. The bearing contact was being made; but then she would back off and give attention to her own condition, thus "curing" her sympathetic condition induced by the bearing contact. When bearing is done properly, it continues until the person recovers and the weight of the contact disappears on its own. He characterizes what she had been doing as cheating, trying to make the process go faster but actually getting separated from the real situation as a result. The service aspect of the meditation is then discussed. Suwondo then describes an experience he had when he was bearing his son. His son was sick with typhus (the diagnosis was confirmed by a lab test). Typhus is

characterized by high fever and chills, and is often accompanied by severe headache. At home, before taking him to the doctor, Suwondo tried to treat him himself by bearing him and by making him drink water which had been meditated on to fill it with healing energy. Suwondo says that, for reasons unknown to him, he has had great success with this technique. The boy's fever came down; but, to be sure, they went to the doctor anyway. Suwondo himself ran a fever but indicates that this sort of symptom transfer is usual.

Wondo: You should realize that your duty is not just to your own body. That's because meditation is an effort to help. When you try to help, it's good, isn't it? This meditation isn't just for your own body. When you meditate, your children should be included as if they were gathered in your arms.

Dewi: In fact, when I go out at night I always . . .

Wondo: That's not what I mean. I mean to take them in your arms, to be holding them in your arms before you go to sleep but to do it in *rasa*.

Dewi: But isn't this being improper and requesting something from Tuhan?

Wondo: No, they are born as part of you. "Here, Tuhan, me and, how about it, me and my small children." So when you lie down to sleep, you meditate and you recall your children, think about them. I don't mean to cradle them physically, but encompassed within your *rasa*.

Dewi: How about it, Pak? How is that done?

Wondo: You can just do it like that or you can also bear your husband along with your children. It'll be heavier with your husband, but you can try. If it is too heavy with your husband included, then don't. But try it with your children, try it. Just now you thought, "Well, with my husband, I don't know about that." It actually would be harder, you know.

Dewi: I'd like to request that you give me the key by bearing me.

Wondo: When you're going to bear your husband and your children, you don't use your arms--that would be heavy. They are born in your *rasa*, you bear them within your own experience. Let's try it. Let's meditate together. No, no, that's wrong, not like that, not like that. Not yet, not yet, don't mutter to yourself like that. Try to relax. Be empty, no, no, not . . . that's all right, be empty. Yes, like that. That's firmness there. Just relax, but not that much. Relax, relax. It's heavy if you do it like that. Hold on, wait a minute. Now please, you and me together now, please. Recall your husband and your children. Yes, all right, here there was a change in feeling. Try not to respond. Just receive it, just feel

it. Surrender to Tuhan. "This is my duty as the mother of my children. What must I do so that they will be healthy and safe?" Surrender, surrender. [Long silence; at one point during the silence Suwondo does the full exhalation, heavy breathing.] All right, that's enough for now. Slowly now, take your time. How about it? Tell me. Please tell me the truth now. How was it?

Dewi: My true feeling?

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: I just felt steadfast.

Wondo: And before you felt steadfast?

Dewi: I didn't enjoy it.

Wondo: How was the meditation itself?

Dewi: My meditation wasn't very . . .

Wondo: It was rushed. But the steadfastness was right. That's the way you bear someone. Like that. That was bearing.

Dewi: I felt as if, "This is meditation, why do I feel weighted down?"

Wondo: It's heavy bearing people. Your own body feels heavier when you meditate bearing someone. The feeling is like that.

It's heavy bearing someone, you know?

Harno: Was there a hot feeling?

Wondo: There sure was. In this case there was a feeling of heat, but it's not always like that.

Harno: No, I mean in Dewi just now, how about it?

Wondo: Yes, there was a heat.

Dewi: If my children have a fever, would that do it?

Wondo: Yes, that could be. But how about it, like before for instance. While I was accompanying you, it was just going along and then suddenly the feeling became real claustrophobic, stuffed. And you know that when the feeling gets constricted like that, I go into the heavy breathing to clean it up. As for your role in that, in a contact like bearing, the linkage is mutual and you should try to help.

Dewi: I felt very constricted too, but I didn't do the breathing.

Wondo: When you hear me breathing like that, you know that something is stuffing me up, thunk, like a weight, so I tried to do the breathing to see if it would help. It was funny, though. I myself didn't have anything going on but then suddenly, thunk, this disturbance hit.

Dewi: So the feeling was coming from my children.

Wondo: Your children and your husband.

Harno: Do they have a fever?

Dewi: Yes, all three of them are running a fever.

Wondo: I didn't know; then bearing them is your duty.

Dewi: Actually, during times like these, I try to meditate as best I can.

Wondo: You meditate, but you don't bear them. Didn't I ask you?

Dewi: Yes, you did.

Wondo: It's different, you're looking for an easy way, but that's called cheating.

Anonymous: Unwilling to bear but asking to be born herself.

Dewi: But it's hard.

Wondo: Now then, if it gets too hard, just do the best you can. When you receive something like that just try the breathing to see if it helps. So the meditation isn't just for you yourself, it's for all that you are a part of and in contact with in your experience. It's a service.

Anonymous: Thus, even here at this meeting.

Wondo: It's a service.

Anonymous: This is a kind of service.

Wondo: It's service. The children were given to you or, rather, to us all, to be taken care of, to be raised, to, ah, you know . . .

Harno: When you've studied it yourself, you're sure to see it that way.

Wondo: There should be no personal motive to acquire something. This is just an exercise in order to give service.

Dewi: I was in a quandary last night. I couldn't get to sleep; so instead of bearing them, I just tried to meditate.

Wondo: No, no, just try this. For a fact, when you bear your children it will be heavy. I can't say that it won't, but how about it, mother? What is your part in all this? But you should ask, "Does it really do any good?" This next really happened; it was experience. My son came down with typhus fever. We hadn't been to the doctor yet and I questioned inside, "How about it, what should I do?" I was quiet about it, but then suddenly it came to me, what I should do. So I gave him water that I had meditated on to drink. He started getting better, but we still went to the doctor. I gave him over to the doctor, but the fever was already broken. I was running a fever myself, but that was all right. (Grogol 6/1/79: 218-20)

Outlook

The following citations do not depict applications of technique but, rather, give examples of how Sumarah practice is used to interpret incidents and problems. These citations all come from Suwondo. In the first, romantic love is considered. In the second, Suwondo takes up the topic of girl-watching. In the third, he discusses responsibilities in having children. In the final citation, Suwondo describes the death of a mystical adept who was his great uncle.

In the following citation, Suwondo discusses romantic love and gives Sumarah's reasons for classing it as an emotional disorder.

When you are like that, when you're passionately in love, it has to influence your studies--when you're called on to concentrate in your studies, you can't. Even during a test, you're still thinking about your girlfriend, your fiancé. You can't concentrate. This disturbs the powers of concentration. When you try to think about something, your attention is split. But this isn't just the result of love--hate is like that too. If you hate someone, just by meeting him the emotion rises, the emotion comes out. It's just the same. Love influences and hate influences too. Actually, this is generally common among young folks. But there are old young folks too. But generally, especially among us Javanese, we are repressed, restrained. Women here, even though they may have a thought like that, they repress it. It's not expressed because women here are not generally aggressive. But in other places it's common. Sometimes even to the point where the men are less aggressive than the women. Everyone has their own customs.

What we are studying is an art for conforming to the true nature of our desires and making our tools neutral so that they tend to a more positive aspect. The meaning of positive here is not necessarily connected with good or bad but with that which conforms to natural law. This is an art . . . it's badly needed by young men and women who wish to achieve a goal--a provision for later life. These capacities must be harnessed, but they cannot be dissembled. Eventually it will be revealed. When the youth is advised he will resist--that's the way youth is. But eventually most of them who ruin their future end up by breaking their hearts. When a youth has a problem like this, usually he is easily offended and angered. The outcome isn't just that you love Miss A, but rather the problem extends far beyond Miss A to your family and other things as if it were a kind of up-rising. The problem is simply that you are not happy; but the result is very general, like being unwilling to study, not wanting to try, as if you had given up. But the giving up is not an acceptance but a protest of the spirit. True or not? You can behave like that. It's not forbidden; but be aware of the ground-rules. As far as achievement is concerned, if I love some girl, this should be seen not as an obstruction but as a whip, a stimulus. I have her as my ideal, but how can I achieve my ideal with what I have now? I must study hard in order to get a degree or something. How about it? If I want to achieve that, these are the conditions. Sometimes kids are in love but they don't fulfill the necessary conditions. They don't work, they live on hand-outs. In the case of a love like that the young woman is bound to be easily influenced by others because there are lots of conditions which can affect her love. That's the way the world is. For example, someone who has lots of this, who has lots of money--she has to be attracted. Sometimes the girl is blamed for running away--her love is not true love. But can you get along without eating? There are lots of other conditions for love too. It's not just heart to heart, living and dying together--that's a magnificent ideal, but it's a fantasy. When you die, you die alone. If living and dying together were serious, the graveyards

would be full of couples where one died and the other went along. If that were the case, funerals would be for two. So even though people have been married for years, when one dies, the other doesn't want to go along. (Grogol: 6/1/79: 204-205)

In the following citation, Suwondo talks about girl-watching and the problem of sexual attraction. As is usual in topics which are sensitive or embarrassing, Suwondo based his discussion on his own experience. In a humorous fashion, Suwondo depicts the seriousness of the obstacle of girl-watching (*mata kranjang*) to receiving the world accurately and maintaining a balanced perspective.

Being a guide isn't easy. Formerly, when they first started to practice, guides usually dealt only with men. Even when you were mature enough to be guiding regularly, you still weren't allowed to guide women. It was considered dangerous. Before I was allowed to guide women, I had to be cleared first, to enact an oath. My most powerful attraction was always girl-watching. Even though I didn't do anything but look, there was a strong inclination. When I looked at a pretty woman, I got a certain glow. Even after I had started guiding, I still wasn't complete. Pak Hardo forced me to deal with it. "Are you going to change this habit or not?" "I can't change. How do you change? I'd like to mend my ways but, in fact, I can't. I still like looking at girls." So he said, "The way that you change is to enact an oath in your life so that you'll stop." At that point I said to let me think about it for awhile. "Later for that stuff." So I thought about it for a month. Very heavy. Then this came to me spontaneously from inside, "You dare to do bad things, how is it that you don't have the nerve to do something good? You accept the consequences of doing bad things. For example, when you get angry, you accept that later on you will pay for it. How is it that you don't dare to do what is proper? If that's the way you are, there is no need to surrender to Tuhan at all. There is no need to study." That impressed me. When Pak Hardo came over from Yogya, I told him I was ready. So with Pak Hardo witnessing, I swore to Tuhan that I wouldn't do that inside or out. "But I can't do it myself. I humbly request a change, Tuhan." From the outside, it may look like there is no problem, but inside, Tuhan will always know. I could fool other people, "No problem now. It's just like with my little sister." Yeah . . . but inside it's different. So I swore first. One day I was coming home from the meeting at Pak Beisastra's house. It was eleven at night and there were two girls walking down the street. I wanted to look, "Are they pretty or not? When you're by yourself, it's all right to look, isn't it?" While I was arguing with myself, this truck

came--zoom. If I had been looking at the girls, I wouldn't be here now. That would have been it. That was the first time. I confessed this openly to the group and got bawled out, but the struggle went on. One day I was riding my scooter and there was a girl walking, "Hey, she's pretty. I'd like to take another look. Why is it I can't even look? There's nothing wrong with just taking a little look, is there? So I looked and got a crick in my neck. I couldn't move it. I went to Pak Wiryotanoyo's house and he said, "Yeah, that's real good, just keep it up." But after I confessed to it, the pain disappeared completely, just like that. I was very surprised. I thought to myself, "How could it just disappear?" Then I wondered, "What would it actually be like to look at a pretty girl without that attraction?" Take my word for it, it's very pleasant. When you look at a woman who's with her husband, it's not that you want to get in a fight with him. It's like, "I'm just looking, you see I have this desire." It's a source of tension; and when you're free of it, it is very relaxing, very pleasant. To be able to look at a pretty girl and feel like you do with your own child. It's like looking at your own daughter. It's very pleasant not being pushed and pulled by it. The compulsion is actually a form of suffering, and it can be dangerous. That's why you can only start to guide women after the change has taken place. The problem is that if you have become sensitive but have not yet attained selectivity, when you're confronted by a pretty woman, you can't receive it and remain neutral. If the sexual vibrations she's putting out are heavy and you receive them, it can be very difficult. As long as you're not clean, it's as if your radar tells you, "Hey, she likes me!" This is what awakens your desire. That's what's dangerous. Sexual contacts can be very hard to handle.

When it comes, the change is really very pleasant; and, afterwards, I truly gave thanks. But while it was happening, I was afraid I wouldn't feel like a man or something. But after I had adjusted to the change, it was very pleasant. I could look at a girl and it didn't influence me. The old way was like being hungry but not being allowed to eat, you know? Like when you have just come down with typhus and, in fact, you want to eat but it's not allowed. That's real hard. You just sit there and drool.

You have to learn to watch yourself, though, to be self-critical. Like before the oath, I would be walking along with my wife and there would be a girl over there. Actually, I was no longer with my wife. My attention had jumped over there to the other woman. Of course, I didn't want my wife to know, so I'd be sneaking a look out of the corner of my eye without moving my head. When you're able to stop doing that, it's very pleasant. After you've stopped, your wife can relax too and she can have more trust in you. When she gets jealous of something, you can confront it and correct it.

One time I was coming home from a meeting at Pak Darso's. I had just taken the oath. I was giving a pretty Australian a ride home on the back of my scooter. Pak Wiryo is getting old

now, but back then he was still very strong. So as I was taking her home, Pak Wiryo was spiritually accompanying me and he monitored my condition all the way home. He didn't tell me he was going to do it, but he went all the way home with me. The next day, Pak Wiryo greeted me by saying, "How'd you do it? I couldn't have done that myself."

The sexual capacity remains but it is tuned to your wife. That's called instinct or primal urge. It's not desire but instinct. They're different. For instance, you can do birth control without using any pills, tools, kitchen appliances, anything. Sex is instinctual but the instinct is not something you feel every minute; that's the desire. Like when you don't get it and you get angry. It's not right. "I'm busy, dear." "Aaarhh, what do you mean?" That's not right, that's desire. When you accept your responsibility fully, that's the primal aspect. It's like when I go out, my family goes with me. In my rasa, I'm always with my family. So when anything comes up, I'm with my family. It's very pleasant.

In the following citation, Suwondo presents the Sumarah perspective on sex and the responsibilities of having children.

There are three kinds of marriage: marriage of desire or physical marriage, marriage of feeling which is when the rasa is linked and the two feel as one, and marriage of the spirit. A marriage of desire is unstable. When you're attracted to this person, all right; but when you get tired of them, you want another, and so on. That's marriage of desire. The danger of all this is to the children. Much of what is done in meditation is dedicated to pre-natal education. As our elders used to say, "When a couple wish to have sexual union, they should take a cool bath first." The idea is that the coolness of the bath brings calm. You should also put good pictures on the wall of your bedroom. This can help through the influence of seeing the pictures. But the main thing is to be in a state of meditation during the act because if the whole situation is calm, it will attract a good soul if there is conception. If this is done before birth, then it is easy to teach the child after birth because the spirit is mature and good.

We are all confronted by three kinds of sin: the sin from before our birth, which our spirit carries on from before; the sins of our father and mother, which is the sin of the family into which we are born; and our own sins after we are born. Before we are born, we still have the sins of the soul from previous incarnations.

I've investigated this with my four children and tried to relate it to their characters, "Oh, when this one was conceived, I was like that and now it shows up in her." For example, when the first one was conceived, I was doing the "night-bathing" form of self-discipline and she came out strong-willed. When the second one was conceived, I was kind of doing what I felt

like. I was just playing badminton and wasn't thinking about my responsibilities at home. I clashed with my wife all the time back then because I played badminton and she worked. When I was told to help with the work, I just wanted to get my own way. The second child tends to be lazy and self-indulgent. The third child died. After the fourth, who became the third, had been in the womb for three months, I started having the phobic attacks. The child was timid and frightened. Afterwards, when I started to study Sumarah, I meditated on him in order to try to give him courage, and he got better. While I was sick, Pak Hardo forbid me to have children. The children had been planned. The first child came one year after we had married. The second was born two and a half years later. The third came three years after that. He died, and we waited three more years before having another. At that time, I got sick and Pak Hardo forbid me to have any more children, it wasn't allowed. When the desire would come, I would hold it. After I had recovered, Pak Hardo said I could have another child. That was after five more years. We haven't had any more since then.

When I was going to have sexual union with my wife, I would be in contact with Pak Hardo. Inside I would be in contact with Pak Hardo, "What should I do?" And afterwards I would ask him to check it, "Was my meditation proper while I was having intercourse with my wife?" It's funny, isn't it? But I did it because I knew that this was very important. As a result of that, we gave my fourth child the name *Kesnabudisanyata*. *Kesna* means good. *Budi* means kindness. *Sanyata* means reality. Some people objected to the name because *sanyata* is not used much in names, "How about *santoso*?" "No, *sanyata*, reality." For those who are young and will be having children, this practice can help to improve the coming generation. It can help to bring peace to the world starting with each child. This is an art. This meditation is an art of living so that we can face life.

In the following, the issue of death is considered. This story illustrates what the Javanese would point to as the experiential basis of their belief in the "journey of death" and the nature of death in general. It concerns the passing of Suwondo's great uncle, who was a mystic adept, though not, to my knowledge, connected with Sumarah. The story was presented in a humorous fashion, but it is no joke.

This happened when my great uncle died. He was one of my teachers; and this took place back when I still had the phobia, the fear of death. I was summoned, "Please pay your respects

because I'm going to die in an hour or so." I got so scared I felt like it was me who was going to die. Boy, was I scared. What a situation, and here I had been put right in the middle of it! I was there with his two children. He told me to watch, so I watched. I watched the show. A while later, wait a minute, wait a minute, he'd gotten real still. It looked like he was passing away. Was I ever scared! I was watching but you know I was scared. Then he told me to hold his hand. So I held his hand in order to help, and then he let go. That was it, he died. He died. That was the final match. Then my mother came and started crying, "Please don't die!"

He came back. What a situation. He came back to consciousness and chatted with us. He said, "Actually, this coming and going isn't very pleasant." This was because of being drawn back by my mother's crying. He hadn't made the full separation from his body yet. Then they started chatting away like nothing had happened. So they talked for awhile, and then I said that I had some things that I needed to do so I asked to be excused. He told me to be sure to come back by four, when he was going to start to go again. I said, "Yes, of course." I said that I would come back; but I was scared and when the time came, I didn't want to go. The time came to return, and I didn't want to go. I decided to go visiting. I was scared, so I went to a friend's house and I told her about my experience. I was watching the clock, "Now he must be starting again." At that point, I was in a great deal of pain. I felt like I was dying myself. I told my friend about it and said that I wanted to go home. I felt that there must be a connection between his dying and my feeling like this. I went home, and then suddenly it just stopped. I was still scared because if the pain was from my connection with him, its stopping was trouble too. My heart had been beating tik, tik, tik, tik, I was so scared. I was afraid of having a heart attack. Then all of a sudden the pain stopped and I wondered, "Maybe he has passed on." I was still scared, but the pain was completely gone. I still had to go back there, though. So I was slowly getting myself together when one of his grandchildren came in and said, "Grandfather is no longer with us." "When did it happen?" "Just now." So he was gone.

He was conscious when he died. Even afterwards, though, I didn't have the nerve to go back there. He just chatted away like nothing was happening. He was conscious throughout the whole thing.

PART V

THE TEXT

Background

The meeting at Grogol on June 1, 1979 lasted from about 1:30 to 4:30. There is a meeting there every week. It was a very hot afternoon, and the temperature was about one hundred degrees out in the sun. Most of the people who attended this meeting are teachers and administrators in the public school system. At the start of the meeting there were seven people present. Participants kept arriving until finally there were about twenty at the meeting. Dr. Peacock, Joseph Errington, and I occupied one corner of the room. The women occupied another corner, and the men took up the rest. This positional segregation is usual. A map showing the approximate seating positions precedes the text, along with a descriptive listing of the participants in the meeting. The room was small for a group that large, and they were packed in rather tightly. Tea and snacks were served during the meeting.

There were a number of major topics in the discussion which ran as follows. In the first, Suwondo talked with a young man named Suripto about sex and desires. Suripto is a young guide-in-training. Suwondo then went on and talked to a young student named Sudibiyo about romantic love. He then spoke with a woman teacher named Dewi about a problem she had at school. A number of shorter

topics then were discussed, and there was a meditation. Dewi then asked about "bearing." A couple of shorter topics followed, and then Dewi asked for some clarification on bearing. Sumarno then started with the long presentation of his problem with the school inspector. After that, Dewi returned for clarification about her problem at school. Sumarno then asked for clarification of his experience. After Sumarno finished, there was a closing meditation and the meeting broke up.

I tried to approximate the tone of the original conversation in the translation. Six codes (languages) were used in the conversation: *krama* (high Javanese), *krama inggil* (high krama), *ngoko* (low Javanese), *madya* (a middle level mixing high and low Javanese), *Jawa desa* (rural Javanese), and Indonesian. Odd bits of English and Dutch were also thrown in occasionally. The tone was almost always convivial. These people are colleagues, and many of them are friends outside the meeting. I tried to avoid rendering the transcript in broken English; however, in some instances this required some liberties because I could not find a close English parallel to the Javanese expression. For example, at the very end of the transcript Suhartono says "*Pak Marno, bakunipun meniko kalawau kejawahan.*" This literally translates as, "I hear that you got rained on, Pak Marno." This refers to Sumarno's problem with the school inspector, and I could find nothing in English which could express this with such refinement. Eventually I settled on, "I hear you had a pretty hard time of it." This dilemma was encountered quite frequently, and the closest English parallel was invariably either less expressive or cruder than the Javanese.

My priorities in translating were that meaning came first, tone came second, and word-for-word matching came third. For a technical discussion of the language use, I recommend Mr. Errington's work when it becomes available. The terms for respect in Javanese are Ibu (Bu) for women and Bapak (Pak) for men. They do not translate into modern English so I have kept them. The basic meanings are mother and father respectively but they are used rather like the old "sir" and "ma'am" of Southern American English. The symbol [. . .] indicates that there was a slight break in the conversation at that point as I turned over the tape.

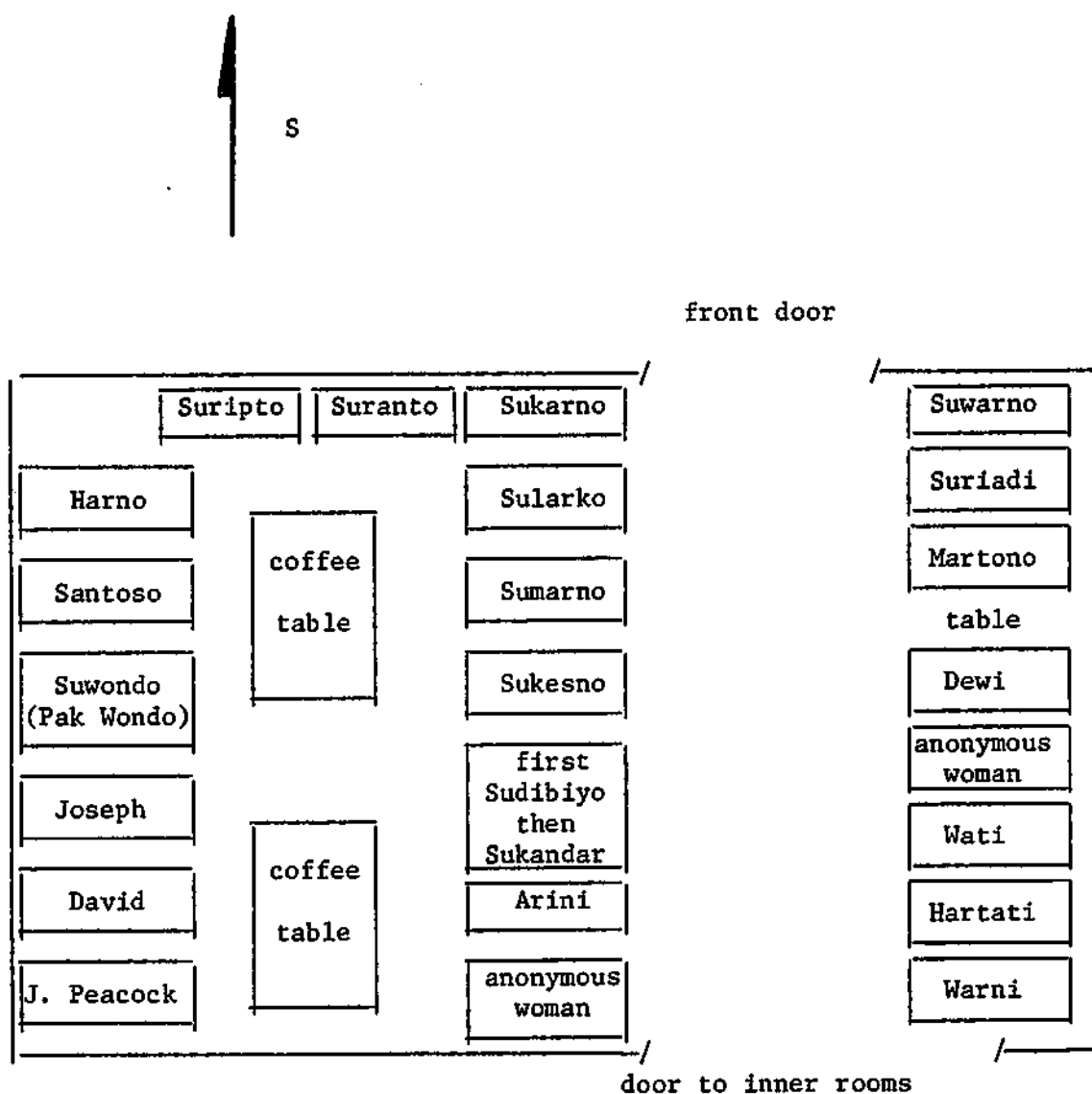


Figure 8. Approximate positions of the participants of the meeting in Grogol on June 1, 1979

Figure 9. Participants

Arini: Female, about 45 years of age, aristocratic background, wife of Suhartono, mother of Sudibiyo

Dewi: Female, about 35 years of age, primary school teacher, mother of three children

Harno: Male, about 55 years of age, guide

Hartati: Female, middle-aged

Martono: Male, about 50 years of age, advanced member

Santoso: Male, middle-aged

Sudibiyo: Male, about 20 years old, son of Suhartono and Arini

Suhartono: Male, about 45 years old, school system official, aristocratic background, husband of Arini, father of Sudibiyo, advanced member

Sukandar: Male, middle-aged, advanced member

Sukarno: Male, middle-aged, school official

Sukesno: Male, middle-aged

Sularko: Male, middle-aged

Sumarno: Male, 40 years old, grammar school principal, father of three children

Suranto: Male, middle-aged, advanced member

Suriadi: Male, middle-aged

Suripto: Male, about 30 years of age, guide-in-training

Suwarno: Male, about 35 years of age

Suwondo (Pak Wondo, Wondo): Male, about 55 years of age, guide of the meeting, father of four children

Warni: Female, about 40 years of age

Wati: Female, middle-aged

Pak Wondo: It changes the psychological character, the attitudes of the ego. So a person sick like that in fact has a kind of pressure below consciousness which is exploded; an explosion below consciousness. A person who becomes sick like that must have an impurity first which explodes below consciousness in order to cleanse itself. When it is clean, then there can be a change in attitude. When his attitude has been changed, then he can change his...

Anonymous (Male, about 30, in training to become a guide): His behavior.

Wondo: Behavior.

Suripto: Like last Thursday, you know? Why did I feel so dumb-founded? Why was that?

Wondo: I don't know. I don't know about that. In fact that's like Bu Marno on Thursday... There wasn't anything unusual--her ego was quiet and empty. Her ego wasn't active, and during the period of transition there is a change which the ego can't--How do you say it?--the ego can't follow because there is a force which assists.

Suripto: It's often like that. How do you follow it, Pak?

Wondo: Follow it? I don't know.

Suripto: Like yesterday, how was I?

Wondo: Still in thought, analyzing and because of that the ego was uneasy and there was still indecision.

Suripto: My own doubt. But why was I acting like such a dummy?

Wondo: When it's like that the ego gets separated from the other tools; it can't be active because it has no support from the other tools, it's just...

Suripto: Going with the current. Why is it like forgetting?

Wondo: It's true that that has no purpose of its own. It doesn't have... So the main thing is the ego. How is the ego, first of all? What is to be corrected is the ego. The ego can go in a positive or a negative direction. It's like that. You have to know the rules. The ego shouldn't just manipulate the other tools, but should be united together with them and aimed towards the goal. Then later you can find out about the rules of living because we study the art of living so that life can be faced. The ego for the most part is still wild; it doesn't know about the way of life.

Suripto: So it's necessary to let it settle down.

Wondo: Settle down first. The external rules--they can be laws, laws of custom, laws of the nation, laws of various kinds, but the laws of proper behavior are lacking. Tapa slira is lacking. So the rules of feeling, knowing that if you do something it can hurt someone else. So that while I may think I'm right, it's not certain that it's right for other people. For this area it may be accepted as true; but for other areas, for other areas it may not fit in. For example, the customs here and in West Java are different.

Suripto: Yesterday, Joko asked yesterday why the picture was yellow [indicating desire, feelings of want or passion] and I felt like trembling. The trembling got more and more subtle, why was that? What was it that became one?

Wondo: Who was that?

Suripto: You know, Mas Joko, the one who never washes.

Wondo: Oh yes.

Suripto: How about it, what was that?

Wondo: What causes the trembling is desire, desire for sex, the sexual urge is still strong. Later it will get less and less. It's to check the desire for sex, his strong sexual urge. So--how do you say it--that capacity has other uses.

Anonymous: Did you come here last Friday, Pak Wondo?

Wondo: Come here? Oh, yes.

Anonymous: I didn't. I had already gone to visit Nyamik.

Wondo: Oh yes.

Anonymous: Nyamik from Magelang.

Wondo: Oh.

Anonymous: I went to Salatiga.

Anonymous: I was the one who arrived.

Anonymous: Last Friday I went to Salatiga, child, visiting my grandchildren. They moved. They were given faculty housing or something like that.

Wondo: Yes.

Anonymous: But now it was awfully far and apparently the household items were lent by the neighbors. The house is small.

Suripto: But as for me, ah...do I still repress my own sexual desires?

Wondo: What are you asking about?

Suripto: The desire sometimes gets real strong. Sometimes I put on the brakes. Sometimes it just wants to come out.

Wondo: Yes you're still repressing, still repressing, yes, that's difficult like that. Actually, the sexual desire which comes out like that is basically a desire, and all desires use up energy. The amount of energy depends on the--what's that called?--the oxygen. When the use of oxygen is moderate, it's no problem. But when the combustion gets excessive in supplying the need for energy, that causes the heart to beat faster and influences body heat. It also changes and strengthens the desire. Because of that, when you want to lessen the desire, exhale completely--do that in order to balance the needs of the desire so that it's not too strong. In fact, this is rather important but it's never paid attention to.

Suripto: Pak Sugianto says that if you want to progress at that you just don't eat apples. Pak Adam and Bu Eve--ah, had sex which came out in various ways.

Wondo: It's not a problem of eating apples, no. But don't--what's the word--don't be a glutton, be gluttonous, don't be gluttonous or overdo it. Because that urge is from a biological need. Don't do that because if you try to brake it or repress it but cannot yet channel the energy, the energy can disturb the body and your health. So if it isn't balanced, it will actually harm your body. While you are still young and strong, it's not apparent. But later, when you get old, it can affect you to the very marrow of your bones. This is powerful stuff. Yesterday, I got into this more deeply with Joko. One of the things which causes one to be unclean is a lack of sex. It's really kind of...

Suranto: Why is it unclean?

Wondo: The feelings. Pardon the expression--I myself, my sex drive is still strong, so when I approach a woman whose--how do you say it--whose sex drive is strong, I receive the vibrations. That means I

am unclean if I am influenced by the sexual vibrations. That's what's dangerous. Later, if you are not strong, it can influence the purity of your feeling. It can become an emotion; and later, although you don't do anything about it, your feeling is twisted. External laws may not have been violated, but the laws of rasa have been.

Suripto: What's the best thing to do then?

Wondo: Be neutral, according to...

Suripto: So that you're not influenced.

Wondo: Yes. Then there is a change in your tools. So later it changes itself and your reaction itself changes. Then you look at the beauty of a woman, you see her beauty but you aren't influenced by it. It's like looking at a landscape. When you look at beautiful scenery, it's just beautiful but it doesn't influence you or attract you. Yes, it's truly beautiful, but it does not cause you to start imagining things like being in love or getting engaged does. This reflects the influence of fantasy, that's what the effect of fantasy is.

Sudibiyo: What if I'm still like that sometimes?

Wondo: That's all right. That's all right, of course you can. In fact, though when you are like that, when you're passionately in love, it has to influence your studies--when you're called on to concentrate in your studies, you can't. Even during a test, you're still thinking about your girlfriend, your fiancé. You can't concentrate. This disturbs the powers of concentration. When you try to think about something, your attention is split. But this isn't just the result of love--hate is like that too. If you hate someone, just by meeting him the emotion rises, the emotion comes out. It's just the same. Love influences and hate influences too. Actually, this is generally common among young folks. But there are old young folks too. But generally, especially among us Javanese, we are repressed, restrained. Women here, even though they may have a thought like that, they repress it. It's not expressed because women here are not generally aggressive. But in other places it's common. Sometimes even to the point where the men are less aggressive than the women. Everyone has their own customs.

What we are studying is an art for conforming to the true nature of our desires and making our tools neutral so that they tend to a more positive aspect. The meaning of positive here is not necessarily connected with good or bad, but with that which conforms to natural law. This is an art...it's badly needed by young men and women who wish to achieve a goal--a provision for later life. These capacities must be harnessed, but they cannot be dissembled. Eventually it will be revealed. When the youth is advised, he will resist--that's the way youth is. But eventually most of them who ruin their futures end up by breaking their hearts. When a youth has a problem like this, usually he is easily offended and angered. The outcome isn't just that you love Miss A, but rather the problem extends far beyond Miss A to your family and other things as if it were a kind of up-rising. The problem is simply that you are not happy; but the result is very general, like being unwilling to study, not wanting to try, as if you had given up. But the giving up is not an acceptance

but a protest of the spirit. True or not? You can behave like that. It's not forbidden, but be aware of the groundrules. As far as achievement is concerned, if I love some girl, this should be seen not as an obstruction but as a whip, a stimulus. I have her as my ideal, but how can I achieve my ideal with what I have now? I must study hard in order to get a degree or something. How about it? If I want to achieve that, these are the conditions. Sometimes kids are in love but they don't fulfill the necessary conditions. They don't work, they live on handouts. In the case of a love like that the young woman is bound to be easily influenced by others because there are lots of conditions which can affect her love. That's the way the world is. For example, someone who has lots of this, who has lots of money--she has to be attracted. Sometimes the girl is blamed for running away--her love is not true love. But can you get along without eating? There are lots of other conditions for love too. It's not just heart to heart, living and dying together--that's a magnificent ideal, but it's a fantasy. When you die, you die alone. If living and dying together were serious, the graveyards would be full of couples where one died and the other went along. If that were the case, funerals would be for two. So even though people have been married for years, when one dies, the other doesn't want to go along.

Sudibiyo: There has been one, like Romeo and Juliet [actual reference a story from ketoprak with a similar plot].

Wondo: It's one in a million. The ones who actually do live and die together are one in a million.--So learn to be balanced, don't just use your forebrain, use this too [indicates the back of the head] and then your notes will be clearer and you will be able to read for a long time without getting tired. Just try it.

Sudibiyo: Heavy concentration [Dutch word].

Wondo: If you use heavy concentration you tire easily, and when you're tired it affects your powers of memory so that you can't recall what you've studied.

Sudibiyo: Heavy concentration gives you a headache fast.

Wondo: It gives you a headache fast, and it makes you forget fast because it's forced. While you're studying, you think you understand, but in a little while you forget. Because of that you should just study a little bit at a time. Remember your capacity. Have some compassion for the one taking the notes. When you need to, say, after an hour, stop, take a break before you start again. Most people don't do that. They are rushed by a desire to get done, so it comes in quickly but it is also lost quickly. This is a law. A law of balance. Even more, if the notes enter rasa, it's very hard to forget them because the power of rasa to receive is broader and wider. So this meditation isn't just for old people. In an important sense it's for young people too, whose tools are not yet stiff but rather still soft and flexible, still--how do you say it?--still soft. When I try to explain something sometimes, I know what I mean to say, but saying it is somehow hard. The words are hard to find because the feeling is already there, the rasa is right, but explaining it is hard. Finding the right words is hard. So that's why the fundamental procedure for meditation is to examine or know where among your tools there is still conflict. If everything is correct--when there is no more conflict--it's easier. Because when

there is unity, the tools help each other and progress together and this is quicker. But then, if there is conflict, they influence each other too; they disturb each other. When it's like that they don't form one purpose or perspective and they are all fragmented. Your attention can't be clear when it is all split up like that. It is especially like that when someone is depressed or angry, and depression is easy to fall into when a youth is in love. That's trouble. It's like being a paranoid. Then you can't think about anything real.

Anonymous: Last Friday you didn't come here.

Wondo: No I didn't.

Anonymous: Oh, last Friday you were working.

Wondo: No, not that. Please, if there are any questions, any questions? How did your tests go? My son said that they were pretty hard.

Sudibiyo: They weren't easy. Yes, they were hard enough.

Sularko: My meditation at five yesterday, Pak?

Wondo: Your meditation at five this morning?

Sularko: No, it was yesterday afternoon, at my place.

Wondo: Your concentration should be lessened, but here [chest area] is good. But your concentration should be let go. If it's--yes, like that--for example, if it's already to here [chest area], then you can let go and the imaginings will be lost. Thus, memories or concentration when you have an ideal--yes, like that--the ideal shouldn't, shouldn't...for example, in prayer, when you let go, surrender, but don't bring it back because you shouldn't start imagining again.

Sularko: The thinking [concentration], but in fact, at 12:30 it was different.

Wondo: It was different. Do you understand the difference? Though it was different, do you know which one was more relaxed? Try to tell me the difference.

Sularko: I was relaxed.

Wondo: Yes, do you understand the difference?

Sularko: Yes, I feel that usually I'm different. Usually I change this.

Wondo: Yes, that's it, in fact you changed it. So which one was better?

Sularko: This one at noon is right.

Wondo: Yes. Can you understand why?

Sularko: Yes. My feeling was different.

Wondo: Well yes, the one before was right.

Sularko: The one at noon was right. But do you agree with this term? Is the proper term "wrong" [actually the term means something done which is outside or breaks the law].

[. . .]

Wondo: Yes, not at first, not at first. [laughter] You shouldn't think so at first. Because if you think that, it's not satisfying, in fact it's unsatisfying. It's unsatisfying for the ego.

Sularko: You mean that if you say it's wrong, it's unsatisfying.

Wondo: No, if you don't accept it, the ego is unsatisfied. Don't

think like that, ah...Eventually it will be wrong, but it shouldn't be seen that way to start with.

Sularko: What about now?

Wondo: No. Because in time, when you are able to surrender, you will know that when you ask for things, that's not proper. When you ask Tuhan for things, it's wrong.

Anonymous: So it's all right.

Wondo: It's not service to Tuhan. In fact, what is asked is service. You should just give service. In time, this becomes clear, although this is not accepted at first; eventually it is like that. In time, there are various levels of attainment.

Sularko: How is my daily meditation?

Wondo: Your daily meditation is all right.

Sularko: I mean, I don't see any change in my feelings since I started coming to these meetings.

Wondo: Yes, still, that's usual. It happens little by little. There has already been some lessening of tension. When it gets less, it's all right. That's all right like that. People always complain. Being dissatisfied that you're not satisfied is all right, but don't overdo it.

Sularko: During my noon meditation my ear started making a humming noise.

Wondo: Yes.

Sularko: So I stopped meditating and it went away.

Wondo: Yes. When you experience that, it's a sign that you shouldn't be so tense. In fact, that is tension, but it's common. It should just be accepted. When there is tension, it means that there are various accompanying conditions. Sometimes when you have tension, you see spots of flashing lights in front of your eyes. In fact, these disturbances change and become either more tense or more relaxed.

Sularko: How do you do that?

Wondo: What you want to change is your thinking. Your attention should be spread throughout your whole body. You should be aware of your whole body in order to locate the places where there is tension. You should feel your whole body, or at least as much of it as you can make yourself aware of; not just a part, but all of it. When you can observe very widely, this in itself will affect the health of your body. When you relax frequently, your body will become more healthy.

Anonymous: I often relax. Why is it that I often get mad when I'm carrying babies?

Wondo: The one carrying the baby is a big baby herself.

Anonymous: When I'm tense, I can't control it.

Wondo: If you wanted to, you could, if you really wanted to. But you don't really want to. I'm sure you don't really want to. If you really want to, when you start to get angry, you should exhale completely. When you get mad--exhale, whenever you feel it coming on. Then it becomes impossible to be mad.

Wati: This is the first test for my meditation. Why does a difficulty come to here [head around eyes] and then turn into a migraine [with visual disturbances]?

Wondo: What's the reason? Emotion. Yes, this happens, but when it happens you must not forget your breathing. When you feel the

disturbance coming on, you must use your breathing to channel the tension off. [breathes out hard] You must do that yourself, you try. Before it gets too intense, before it gets that way, breathe out first, exhale first.

Anonymous: Before it starts to increase?

Wondo: Yes, breathe out first. Don't wait until it gets too strong.

Wati: So that's the way.

Wondo: Yes. And also this--you don't understand your eyes. They should be like this [arms spread wide in front of eyes], not like this [finger held up, pin-point focus]. Try it. You are constantly focused on one point. Focus your attention on a broad frame. Eventually you learn to have your attention not right in front, but spread out. It's relaxing. For example, if you drive a motorcycle fast, it's different from driving it slow. When you drive it fast, there is a kind of threshold of fear, isn't there? When you really go fast, your hand grips tight like this. Try it. Doesn't your hand just do that when you go fast? Without your even being aware of the tension, it's already like this. But when you don't go too fast, just go up to your threshold, try it, you won't feel it's too fast. The hand itself won't feel it's too fast. Try it. The tension is gone. But one person's capacity is different from another's. When I go at about 60KPH, my hands start getting tense by themselves. In fact, there is a kind of boundary, a kind of instinct which insistently reminds you of your fear. This, in fact, must be reduced. Because it's an emotion, the fear causes tension. Just try it.

Arini: But for me, when he is driving, my hands feel stiff and I feel worried. Without knowing it, my hand becomes a fist. The driver in front, but back here I'm worried, apprehensive, and suddenly, I grab onto the driver.

Wondo: When that happens, it's just reflex. For example, when there is trembling it is nothing. But to sympathetically join in the apprehension of the driver, what's this? Although we aren't driving, we are influenced by his tension. When something comes up, when he hits the brakes, we hit them too.

Arini: That's it exactly.

Wondo: Although the one primarily affected is the driver, in fact, it's best that the passenger be comfortable too. What does that mean? The driver must be aware of the emotional state of the passenger and make sure that he is relaxed. When I go fast with an old person as a passenger and he becomes afraid, I understand. I slow down in narrow places so that I'm not going fast at all. When the road straightens out, I increase my speed. Because besides the road conditions, one is no longer affected by the woosh, woosh of the trees going by. When the trees start going by like that, you suddenly think you're going fast. But if you're in an open field, though you're going just as fast, you don't even notice.

Arini: For me that's not true. Busy or not, it's all the same.

Sudibiyo: How is my daily meditation, Pak?

Wondo: Your intention is good. It's just that you can't control yourself yet.

Sudibiyo: Playing around.

Wondo: While you are still young, you won't notice it if your attitude

is like that, because the feeling here is still loose, you know? So that when you get tense, it's easy. You're still flexible. But when you get old, it will get stiff. Just wait. For example, when I was young--say 20 or 30 years old--I'd play badminton for set after set, finish, rest a minute, shower and I'd be on the go again. But now that I'm fifty or so, after playing just one set, I take a break, but as for going on, just wait a minute. Especially, the training for a match and for normal play are different. They look the same, but they are different. There is that competitive emotion, the will to win. But if you are just playing, it is relaxed. If you lose--all right; if you don't lose--that's all right too. You are not affected by your material condition. But sometimes, though our aim is to use sports to make our bodies healthy, we do the opposite and wreck them.

Sudibiyo: She's already lost, but when I was trying to win her it was intense.

Wondo: That's right. When you just let it be as it is, it passes. Like when you go to sleep, it will calm down quickly.

Sudibiyo: Quickly calm down.

Wondo: In time you will become enemies. So your love becomes anger. Look, you tried to win her. It's important now that all that just be put aside for awhile. Girlfriends are all right, but don't get so involved. That way leads to broken hearts. Just let it go. There's no need to dwell on it any more. Broken bones, broken hearts, broken...broken legs. [laughter] That problem seems to have three sides though.

Sudibiyo: That's true.

Wondo: Apparently the quarry had been rather elusive, and the prey got changed. So apparently you were running around in circles. Have I found you out or not? You haven't even told your parents? [To Sudibiyo's mother:] This is what I couldn't explain before. How do you explain love problems like this? Anyway, he's been running around in circles, so now I report it to you. He hasn't told you yet, has he?

Arini (mother): No.

Wondo: Apparently the problem has only now been uncovered.

Anonymous: Stealing love! [laughter]

Anonymous: How could you be so sneaky?

Wondo: You didn't know, did you? When you invited him, you didn't understand.

Arini: Not too quick to realize.

Wondo: Apparently this running around involved liking this one but her not liking him, while in the meantime another likes him but he doesn't like her. So he goes around in circles.

Anonymous: He's a person who...

Wondo: That's not a person, that's a schmerson.

Arini: He says that school comes first.

Wondo: Yes, that's the way it is.--So in this kind of thing we can receive vibrations and they inform the guide in inner-communication. They let me know about the problem. Then I ask about it the same way, using inner-communication. This problem is a kind of rebellion. Here, there is something offered which is not paid attention to. Here, there is that which is sought but not attained. This is a

problem of the young. [laughter]

Anonymous: Really.

Wondo: Sometimes people from the East keep this kind of thing secret. But we have a kind of radar which can pick it up. Sometimes it reveals itself. This is like using psychology; there is no need to ask because it reveals itself. Right here [chest area]. This is an art too. This knowledge can be studied. I am still not particularly proficient, but if there is a vibration and I receive it, I ask the vibration to explain itself. This is an art for which you must be clean, then you can receive these things. Nothing is said openly but inside there is something that tells. That's what is picked up. Sometimes it is a secret. His mother wasn't told, but I found out. Sometimes when it is really top secret, I don't dare reveal it. It's not proper.

Anonymous: You don't dare?

Wondo: No, it's not right. Because then it can disturb or hurt him and he gets angry. But then I ask again, "May I reveal this openly? Will he become angry or close himself off or not?" If not and he will just be mad for a minute, that's all right. [laughter] Embarrassed? That's all right too. But this is needed in order to change or improve him. There is indeed a risk that the anger will become hate. This can happen. But if it doesn't get to the point of being dangerous, it may be revealed. But if it's not the right time yet, it shouldn't be said.

Anonymous: As for me, it's like that.

Anonymous: Yes, that's it.

Wondo: Here, there is a wave and if its frequency has been received precisely, there is no further disturbance and it is clear that he can't lie about it.

Anonymous: But get real mad?

Wondo: No.

Anonymous: You can't lie about it?

Wondo: Yes. The reason is clear. This is just me over here. What's the real reason I can receive these vibrations like this? Sometimes, I myself don't know. I'm not 100% sure. This thing I picked up, is it true or not? But then I ask to find out if it is real. When you ask openly, the proof is reality itself.

Hartati: Like here, behind my eyes, why was it throbbing?

Wondo: You were holding on there...Holding on is all right, you know. It's like when I'm embarrassed but I want to be found out, so I hold onto it. It's true that there is a feeling of embarrassment, but it's nothing. This area [eye area] sometimes gets a shock, is given a shock--zap!

Hartati: The eyes are what get the shock. The eyes before...

Wondo: Yes. So with a paranoid person, you sometimes have to have exact timing--then it can be released. It has to be exact, because if it's not precisely right, it can be dangerous. Sometimes you get the timing right. But if you miss it, it can backfire on you. This is what's hard. This is the real art. Sometimes I'm not as precise as I would like to be, because I'm still learning too. One learns from experience, and in time one gets more accurate. That's how you become proficient. But, as for me, my intension is good; but, in truth, I can't do it very well yet. But I try as best I can.

Later, when he has calmed down [the young man had left], I hope that he'll see that this was something to help, not to hinder. He was going to continue to be unsettled and question: "Living like this, what's the purpose?" But it's not as if there were no goal, because there is a goal, but he has let it go and it becomes empty. Life itself is to be studied. Why is he unwilling to learn? Why doesn't he want to find out what he should do with his life? This, in fact, can be used as a stimulus, not to weaken his resolve, but as a stimulus. And your life is why you will say thanks for her rejection. I grit my teeth--like this--I grit my teeth and try--What am I? Later, if I can attain a title, proper work, try it, isn't that what you want? And I can try to attain more than you, with the grace of God. That's the way to do it--not just to get a girl and concentrate only on her and later end up quarreling. In the long run, you will surely be bored. It's like when you've just bought a new car. How you pamper and polish it! But when it gets old, you just let it go. To be sure, when it's new, you shine it and shine it when it gets dirty. It's the same with husbands and wives. If you've just become engaged, it's like wow! But when she's already your wife, it's different. It's like if you have a new car. If it's still new--wow! Wives are like that too. [laughter] So what we strive for when a couple gets married, first it's a physical marriage, then it becomes a marriage of feeling, then it becomes a marriage of the spirit. That's what it's like to be married. When you have a child--or with your own body--even if your body is ugly, it's your body--you love your body. When it's sick, you treat it. You should love your wife like your body. Even though she may look old and ugly now, you still love her. But often it's not like that. When she starts looking bad, you start looking at other women. It will kind of...apparently it's a kind of attraction, someone who looks pretty to you, pleasant isn't it? But, in fact, it's an agony. Imagining something beautiful like that causes suffering because it's not reality. When I found him out just now, I didn't know beforehand. I didn't know before. I wasn't thinking that, but then, suddenly, it just came to me like that. Was it true or not? But he hadn't said anything to you [his mother]?

Arini: No.

Wondo: But now you know all.

Arini: What was hidden fast is now visible.

Wondo: But he was good. He accepted and didn't fight it too much. Actually, he fought it, but he didn't reject it.

Anonymous: But you've been left behind, haven't you?

Wondo: Yes.

Anonymous: What will happen later?

Wondo: This art is like that. When his business is finished, he can go out and be spiteful. For example, if he doesn't go right away--too late, he's gone. He's already gone now. [motorcycle starts and pulls away]

Anonymous: Why did he leave so fast?

Wondo: I don't know. How about that, though. I didn't think he would go that soon. I don't know why.

Dewi: May I ask about what I experienced last Monday between 8 and 10.

Wondo: Night or...

Dewi: Morning.

Wondo: Actually, you're already aware of it.

Dewi: Who?

Wondo: You.

Dewi: Aware of my error.

Wondo: Yes, in fact.

Dewi: But for...so I experienced this. How about it? Was it with emotion or not?

Wondo: With, rather with, but you're aware of that. So while you're not yet correct, you're aware of it.

Dewi: It's like this, Pak Wondo. I have this colleague who was accusing me to the point where it wasn't good. In fact, it wasn't true, so it was like he wasn't in his right mind. Like...

Wondo: In fact, you're aware of his intentions.

Dewi: Yeah. When I became aware of them I called him a dirty old rag. He held onto that and wanted to prove me wrong.

Wondo: Yes. You're aware of that.

Dewi: I didn't respond [the next time], so he just kept on attacking. I just stayed quiet and didn't respond, so I had um...Later I responded with a statement. I wrote up my answer and stuck it on the bulletin board. I didn't want to answer verbally.

Wondo: Actually, that was unnecessary.

Wondo: But this is a money problem, Pak. So I was alleged to be taking bribes. I was thought to be corrupt.

Wondo: It's not important. You should just be aware of it. Not responding doesn't necessarily mean that you're wrong. Later the reality of the situation will come out, and other people will know. If you can, don't be like this; the emotion right now.

Dewi: But it was like this, Pak Wondo. He demanded a written report. In fact, last January I wanted to make a written report, but the principal said not to. So now, because of these rumors, I stuck it up on the bulletin board. The record showed the treasury in debt to me, but I was thought to be embezzeling.

Wondo: Don't emotionalize it into a big thing.

Dewi: But I'm upset.

Wondo: That's all right, the situation is different. [laughter]
I said you were aware.

Dewi: The problem is, it was in front of my students.

Wondo: It's not important. Later you will be in a strong position. Why don't you want to let the process complete itself? That's what you should do, you know.

Dewi: I'm in too much of a hurry--not patient.

Wondo: Really now, are you aware of it or not? If you're not, then that's the way it is--it's not important. Ah--this is what you have to be aware of, just this--The thing you sometimes get wrong is right here. But if you say you're not strong enough, that's all right too.

Dewi: This all started on Saturday, then Monday, and again on Tuesday, Wednesday. Yesterday, I decided not to reply. I wouldn't respond.

Wondo: Really now. Isn't this the awareness?

Dewi: Yes, awareness.

Wondo: This is the awareness I was commending actually. But if you can't keep it up, that's all right too.

Dewi: Yesterday he tried to provoke me.

Wondo: You would have liked to argue, wouldn't you? [laughter]

Dewi: When he approached me, I was kind of...

Wondo: Yes, but you wanted to, didn't you? That's all right. It's all right. This has already gotten past that point, but if you want to do it like that--although the principal and everyone already understand, especially since they can help you--but if you're upset, that's all right.

Dewi: He defied my husband--"If you want to ask your husband for help, go right ahead."

Wondo: Only like that? Don't make a big deal out of it. If it were me, I would not. You should do it like this. If it were me, I just need to know that I am right. Do you feel right too? Do you believe in Tuhan or not? Do I also believe in Tuhan or don't I? Let's try considering it. Don't believe to start with. But I ask you if you feel that the accusation is true or not. You must accept it, that if you feel it is not [...] It's satisfying. But if you don't believe in Tuhan, then do you believe in natural law or not? Think about it. "No, I don't." But if you say that you don't then later you face the consequences. But if, on the other hand, you say yes, then it's all right, but if not, then you face the punishment. "All right then, but where's the proof?" Just try this, just try to follow and understand the process. How about it? Isn't that more satisfying? Don't fuss and fight so. This is what is not good. Your support is strong, but still you lack patience. If you could be patient for a little while it would benefit you. For example, the other day I myself had an experience which was like what I'm telling you now. I got a test. If I'm provoked like that, to the point I'm yelled at, people would say to themselves--"Why does he just stay quiet and take it when he gets treated like that?" The thing was that this was with my mother, not with me. If it had been with me, I could accept it. But it was with my mother who is senile. I had to take action. This is outrageous. I had to, but it wasn't for myself. Basically, like I said, if it had just been me, I wouldn't want to fuss about it. But when it is my infirm mother, it is my duty. I had to be calm, but my emotion rose and I thought, "I'd like to punch that guy in the nose." It was like that you know, but there was a lot more that didn't come up. But this feeling came over me, "This guy's looking to get punched in the nose." Even though it didn't come out. The anger didn't come out but there was an urge to punch him in the nose--treating an old lady like that. That caused a rush of anger like that--anger and emotion, although it didn't come out.

Dewi: So you got mad.

Wondo: Yes, it happens.

Dewi: He [the teacher attacking her] also intensified my fear of this challenge. I didn't know it, but this morning he was carrying a knife around.

Wondo: It's nothing.

Dewi: So he was very frightened and afraid he was going to get jumped.

Wondo: Well yes, when you get frightened like this, it's in your own

imagination, isn't it? In the past you were like that, but now, over time, it has gotten less. Don't keep going over and over things. It limits your ability to progress. It's a shame. You should be more able to criticize yourself and your tools. This meditation isn't just being quiet; it's to change your attitudes, to change your character, attitudes and character. [long silence] Please, are there any more questions? If I can give some comment on your experience, I will. If no comment comes, then I won't say anything. Later, if the comment and your experience don't jibe, let me know so that we can discuss it. Like this one just now apparently didn't jibe, so we talked about it.

Sukesno: What about Monday night at about 11, Pak?

Wondo: This Monday night or last?

Sukesno: The other day.

Wondo: The other day at 12 o'clock. [silence] In fact, it was rather good. Why? What was happening?

Sukesno: I had a coughing fit until I could hardly breathe.

Wondo: Rather good. Your experience was unpleasant, but your condition was still good. But here, there is a feeling of--how do you say it--of apprehension. Here [chest area?], in fact. This is an indication that the person has been forced to acquire some self-understanding. In fact, you complained, and the complaint was really there. You thought, "Gosh! How unpleasant that was! And the anxiety that went along with it!" That's why when it's like that, you know, it looks good from this perspective. So a bitter experience, one that's not at all pleasant, can change your attitudes. It kind of gives you training. When you belittle something and then someone complains about it, you think, "Well really, why are you making such a fuss?" But if it is your own body, as when your breathing is like that, it causes *tepa slira* to arise. Sometimes it's like that. Sometimes bad experiences for the feeling in your body are good for the psyche, for the character of the ego. Generally we believe that if the ego likes something, it's good for us, but it isn't a sure thing. Sometimes we don't like something, although it is good for us.

Anonymous: Like the difference between *rasa murni* and purity of feeling.

Wondo: With purity of feeling, there is still a belief; but with *rasa murni*, that's reality. So before you begin to meditate, breathe in and out a few times. Then whatever is in the unconscious can kind of be channeled off and your meditation will be easier. But if you still have something below consciousness, it's difficult to become clean [open].

Sukandar: Yesterday, from 1:30 to 3.

Wondo: Yesterday what?

Sukandar: Last night.

Wondo: What were you excited about?

Sukandar: I was lying down to sleep, but I wanted to meditate first. It was already late. The TV had already signed off after the badminton match. It was already one o'clock when I got into bed and meditated before going to sleep. Then I envisioned an offering in the center of

a three-way intersection. I was being awaited. They were waiting for me to invite me to meditate. Then in the meditation, I found myself slipping backwards. But then I realized it with a kind of vibration, then this vibration got more subtle and then stopped and then I went out, like flying above everything, over the river and all. But where did I go? I can still remember everything. But then, suddenly I remembered Pak Wondo--Oops, Pak Wondo--so I remembered your telling me the other day that this sort of thing is not good. I had to return to Solo, so I came back.

Anonymous: Where did you go?

Wondo: What did you find out? I sort of learned something when I did that, did you? I always learned something...

Sukandar: How do you make sure you don't take off like that?

Wondo: Well, you've already experienced it, so if you just don't intend it in the future, it would be best.

Sukandar: Before, you said that this was because of tension [concentration], but I was very relaxed.

Wondo: No, no, it's not like that. Just don't strive for that, but even if it does happen, it's no big deal. It's no big deal. Here you have had the experience but don't think of it as a goal.

Sukandar: No. I will remember.

Wondo: Please help yourselves to food and drink.

Anonymous: Thanks. [general hubbub]

Wondo: For example just now--yes, I like these--this just now, I couldn't explain in detail because it wasn't necessary. It wasn't necessary to explain in detail. But with the young man who was here before, detail was necessary in the explanation. When it's like just now, I just, "Oh, you seem to understand." But when it is needed, more detail can be given. But if it's not needed, I just do this. It's not important. So this way, I am spontaneous and elicit, that's all. But, if necessary, it can be detailed. So it's not a sure thing. It depends on the circumstances. If detail is needed, it can be fully exposed; but this time it was not. So before, the place I received that wasn't here [head], but here [chest area]. Thought sometimes gets misled, doesn't it? But that's the way it is. Because of that, our study here is to make rasa sensitive first, and then you can be as selective as you need to as long as your rasa is sensitive first. When you haven't practiced this, the head starts analyzing and rasa gets lost. So you just have to follow the process. If you don't it can be dangerous, so you just follow the process.

Harno (another guide): How was I at twelve o'clock last night, Pak?

Wondo: The feeling was good. What were you examining?

Harno: Well, it's like this. Last night I was meditating when everything--I think the term is "transcended." Was this releasing transcendence in the unconscious or what? So this came out. I just went along with it and fell asleep in the chair.

Wondo: That was an explosion in the unconscious, but since you were conscious of what was happening it became an expression of the unconscious. You could be aware as your good and bad experiences came out. Just let it go. Just confess to it. This is a very profound experience. In this study it's as if you were examining yourself. Then afterward, when you have been given the material, you can see,

"Oh, I was wrong, that wasn't my intention. It would have been better if my intention had been this. What must I do to correct this?"

The investigation goes like that.

Harno: So this was an explosion below consciousness.

Wondo: Yes, so if you can, your intention should be to let this stuff go and not let it separate and fill up again. It's like developing a new character, but your apprehension should be reduced. What are you worried about? Let's see, what are you worried about? Why are you apprehensive? You know that being afraid is not good.

Harno: I'm afraid of losing control.

Wondo: Yes, there's fear there. When you let go, there can be fear there. But, in fact, this can change your character.

Harno: I was with Pak Sri the other day, and he said not to let things get out of control.

Wondo: It's not that you shouldn't let go, it's that you should be unwilling to let things get out of control. But they're different. Of course you are unwilling to lose control but that doesn't mean that you don't want to let go. That's the fear right there, "If that happens I won't be able to handle it, it might overwhelm me. I'm clear about where I am, but if I let go, my ego won't be there."

Harno: A lack of faith.

Wondo: Yes, Mas Wiryotanoyo got stuck there for a long time. "If I let go, then I will be gone and I won't be aware of anything." This is the expression of the ego. The comfort of the ego comes when it feels it can understand. When you let go, it generally opens a tool which is like clairvoyance, but you have to let go first. Formerly, I was very gifted at that, but nowadays I'm not. When I need it, it comes; when I don't, it doesn't.

Harno: That's probably right, Pak...I never did get to sleep on the sofa or bed. I just stayed there until at three o'clock, I couldn't sleep any more. It was like that.

Wondo: That happens according to your physical condition. If your body is already fully rested, sleeping for one hour is like sleeping for many hours. But, on the other hand, sometimes you can sleep for hours but are still not rested--I'm often that way. This is a question of whether the relaxation was effective or not. If the relaxation is real, a rest of one hour is already sufficient, as opposed to five hours of sleep which is still active. It doesn't ah...

Anonymous (pamong in training): What was your point in being in the chair?

Harno: I don't know. I just was there and fell asleep. Besides meditating, I was just going along with the situation. That was my thought about it, and I just stayed there.

Anonymous: In the chair?

Harno: Yes.

Wondo: Please medit...[Indonesian word used in meetings involving Westerners] let's meditate together [Javanese words]. Please, let's meditate together. Make yourself comfortable. There's no rush. [silence] Beginning from the outside, relax, relax your body, relax your body. Relax it fully. From your head to your feet--relax. Lessen your activity. Lessen your activity. Generally, the thinking

is what's difficult. Reduce your thought activity. Thought is the hardest activity to reduce and especially to stop. It is very difficult. The theory is easy--just don't think about anything--but the practice is hard. Because it has become a habit to always have some thinking going on. Even though the body is resting during sleep, thought sometimes causes dreams to arise. But then if you can truly rest, then the sleep can be truly peaceful and there are no dreams. Generally, when it is like that, when you wake up your body feels fresh, healthy, refreshed. This shows that during sleep there was no activity, so there was no strength going out. Beginning from the outside. Relax your body first. For awhile you can use your breathing as an indicator. If the breathing is right, it should be refined. The breathing should be soft and the heartbeat should also not be too rapid. Allaaah. Allaaah. Allaaah. All right now, whoever still feels tension in their neck, try to relax it by moving your neck around in order to help it relax. In meditation you can move your body when it is necessary in order to help get the tension out. Sometimes without our noticing it, even though we are quiet our body can become tense. So we move in order to give the tension a channel out. Check to see if your thoughts are active again. Because of that there is tension in front of your brain [forebrain]. Relax that again. Your attention should be on feeling your whole body. Allaaah. Now put your attention on the feeling of rasa itself. What is called rasa is a feeling of calm acceptance, of neutrality. Feel the calm acceptance. Don't focus on the pleasantness of your body. Before, we entered into the feeling of the body, which is pleasant; but now we go deeper and try to feel the rasa itself, the feeling of neutral calm. Although there may be changes, remain calm, accept them. If you go back to thinking for a minute, that's all right. Don't try to force it. It's the process coming out of rasa. It's as if there were a wave which rises and falls. That's all right. Because rasa itself is alive, so it has a kind of rhythm. The wave is like a rhythm. Don't be upset if your thoughts are still active. Let it be, and it will calm itself. Don't force it. Just know, be aware of the movements arising from your tools--from thought, from emotion, from ego. So in meditation like this, in fact, we make use of, or receive, the waves of nature. Thus, we can receive the waves of nature and we can cause waves to vibrate in nature around us. Nature also records waves. But, on the other hand, we can also record or receive the recordings of nature. It depends on our sensitivity towards the vibrations. What I mean by rasa is how sensitive rasa is. We can receive the waves of nature with our rasa and we can also cause waves to vibrate in nature outside ourselves. [long silence] Be at peace, be at peace. Slowly, slowly, slowly, take your time. Don't rush it...Once we made an experiment. We meditated and taped it. The vibrations entered the tape, and I sent it to Steven Cock in America. He also received the vibrations. With the help of the tape, I also tried to see if I was making changes. At that time I was making lots of recordings while I was practicing Sumarah. So the vibrations were saved on the tape. There was a friend who was like a medium, and he was sitting in front of me. I knew that my vibration had been recorded earlier, and I played the tape [without his knowledge]. He was surprised. It was as if there

was a force there. He was from Surabaya, a sailor. He had unusual strength in magic. So there was something like an electric current, and that vibration had entered the tape because the cassette also uses magnetism in order to record. So when it is played, the vibration comes out again. I was surprised too. How could this be? I didn't tell him what it was beforehand. I just tried it. I played it, and there it was. What was his name?

Anonymous: Wandī.

Wondo: Wandī. Please, just now during the meditation, how was your feeling? What was your experience? When you have relaxed your body, the feeling of the body is pleasant. But don't stop with that pleasant feeling, go deeper to where *rasa* is, calm, neutral, which is there. This feeling is neutral; if it is pleasant, it is the feeling of the body, but if it is neutral, it is the feeling of *rasa*. The action of feeling the feeling of *rasa* is different. The feeling of feeling is neutral, but the feeling of the body is pleasant. In Javanese, the feeling of the body is *tentrem* [pleasant, tranquil].

Santoso: This should be empty and calm.

Wondo: It depends on where *rasa murni* is at that time.

Santoso: How about a feeling of purity, is that still just an emotion?

Wondo: It's just an emotion, and, in fact, if your feeling is not pure, that's all right too. So the purity of the feeling is not what's important; what's important is open reception.

Harno: *Rasa murni* is just open reception.

Wondo: Yes, purity of feeling only seems as though...

Harno: ...at peace.

Wondo: Yes, at peace, but later there will be emotions.

Dewi: This peace is like...

Wondo: *Luyut* [no translation, a pleasant, drifting, semi-conscious feeling sometimes coming in meditation].

Dewi: Yes. What about this drifting?

Wondo: Yes. *Luyut* is your limit. It is the limit of your ability to be aware. Later it will change again. Later the *luyut* will start farther along, in as much as you have deepened your consciousness.

Dewi: I was kind of taken unawares [another hard term to translate].

Wondo: Yes, this actually is your limit. In the future, when you reach the same place again, it won't take you unawares. But when you go deeper still, *luyut* will happen again. This increases your depth. When you have achieved depth, the emotions are affected in proportion to the depth achieved. In the past, before you had gotten this far, you would have lost consciousness, but not now. In the future, after you have experienced this a number of times, you won't lose consciousness. That's where progress comes into it.

You should realize that your duty is not just to your own body. That's because meditation is an effort to help. When you try to help, it's good, isn't it? This meditation isn't just for your own body. When you meditate, your children should be included as if they were gathered in your arms.

Dewi: In fact, when I go out at night I always...

Wondo: That's not what I mean. I mean to take them in your arms, to be holding them in your arms before you go to sleep but to do it in *rasa*.

Dewi: But isn't this being improper and requesting something from Tuhan?

Wondo: No, they are born as part of you. "Here, Tuhan, me and, how about it, me and my small children." So when you lie down to sleep, you meditate and you recall your children, think about them. I don't mean to cradle them physically, but encompassed within your rasa.

Dewi: How about it, Pak? How is that done?

Wondo: You can just do it like that or you can also bear your husband along with your children. It'll be heavier with your husband, but you can try. If it is too heavy with your husband included, then don't. But try it with your children, try it. Just now you thought, "Well, with my husband, I don't know about that." It actually would be harder, you know.

Dewi: I'd like to request that you give me the key by bearing me.

Wondo: When you're going to bear your husband and your children, you don't use your arms--that would be heavy. They are born in your rasa, you bear them within your own experience. Let's try it. Let's meditate together. No, no, that's wrong, not like that, not like that. Not yet, not yet, don't mutter to yourself like that. Try to relax. Be empty, no, no, not...that's all right, be empty. Yes, like that. That's firmness there. Just relax, but not that much. Relax, relax. It's heavy if you do it like that. Hold on, wait a minute. Now please, you and me together now, please. Recall your husband and your children. Yes, all right, here there was a change in feeling. Try not to respond. Just receive it, just feel it. Surrender to Tuhan. "This is my duty as the mother of my children. What must I do so that they will be healthy and safe?" Surrender, surrender. [long silence; at one point during the silence Pak Wondo does the full exhalation, heavy breathing] All right, that's enough for now. Slowly now, take your time. How about it? Tell me. Please tell me the truth now. How was it?

Dewi: My true feeling?

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: I just felt steadfast.

Wondo: And before you felt steadfast?

Dewi: I didn't enjoy it.

Wondo: How was the meditation itself?

Dewi: My meditation wasn't very...

Wondo: It was rushed. But the steadfastness was right. That's the way you bear someone. Like that. That was bearing.

Dewi: I felt as if, "This is meditation, why do I feel weighted down?"

Wondo: It's heavy bearing people. Your own body feels heavier when you meditate bearing someone. The feeling is like that. It's heavy bearing someone, you know?

Harno: Was there a hot feeling?

Wondo: There sure was. In this case there was a feeling of heat, but it's not always like that.

Harno: No, I mean with Dewi just now, how about it?

Wondo: Yes, there was a heat.

Dewi: If my children have a fever, would that do it?

Wondo: Yes, that could be. But how about it, like before for instance. While I was accompanying you, it was just going along and then suddenly the feeling became real claustrophobic, stuffed. And you know that

when the feeling gets constricted like that I go into the heavy breathing to clean it up. As for your role in that, in contact like bearing, the linkage is mutual and you should try to help.

Dewi: I felt very constricted too but I didn't do the breathing.

Wondo: When you hear me breathing like that, you know that something is stuffing me up, thunk, like a weight, so I tried to do the breathing to see if it would help. It was funny, though. I myself didn't have anything going on but then suddenly, thunk, this disturbance hit.

Dewi: So the feeling was coming from my children.

Wondo: Your children and your husband.

Harno: Do they have a fever.

Dewi: Yes, all three of them are running a fever.

Wondo: I didn't know; then bearing them is your duty.

Dewi: Actually, during times like these, I try to meditate as best I can.

Wondo: You meditate, but you don't bear them. Didn't I ask you?

Dewi: Yes, you did.

Wondo: It's different, you're looking for an easy way, but that's called cheating.

Anonymous: Unwilling to bear but asking to be born herself.

Dewi: But it's hard.

Wondo: Now then, if it gets too hard, just do the best you can.

When you receive something like that just try the breathing to see if it helps. So the meditation isn't just for you yourself, it's for all that you are a part of and in contact with in your experience. It's a service.

Anonymous: Thus, even here at this meeting.

Wondo: It's a service.

Anonymous: This is a kind of service.

Wondo: It's service. The children were given to you or, rather, to us all, to be taken care of, to be raised, to, ah, you know...

Harno: When you've studied it yourself, you're sure to see it that way.

Wondo: There should be no personal motive to acquire something. This is just an exercise in order to give service.

Dewi: I was in a quandary last night. I couldn't get to sleep, so instead of bearing them, I just tried to meditate.

Wondo: No, no, just try this. For a fact, when you bear your children it will be heavy. I can't say it won't, but how about it, mother?

What is your part in all this? But you should ask, "Does it really do any good?" This next really happened; it was my experience. My son came down with typhus, fever. We hadn't been to the doctor yet and I questioned inside, "How about it, what should I do?" I was quiet about it, but then suddenly it came to me, what I should do. So I gave him water that I had meditated on to drink. He started getting better, but we still went to the doctor. I gave him over to the doctor, but the fever was already broken. I was running a fever myself, but that was all right.

Santoso: What is called rasa is having feeling but more than feeling.

Wondo: Rasa is...

Santoso: Having feeling but more than feeling.

Wondo: What?

Santoso: Deep feeling.

Wondo: The area of rasa is broader so it can receive more broadly. So just then, didn't we relay it. She thought about her children and it was relayed to us. We didn't know that the children had a fever. We hadn't been told that. But it comes from here [chest area?]. So, that's the contact. We meditate to sensitize the rasa so that it will be sensitive and can receive, but sometimes it disturbs us, but that's all right. So you feel a contact with you don't know what, and it disturbs you. But later when you're used to it, it's no problem. When you have practiced, especially like Patrick who is a doctor, he is very good for his patients. For ordinary patients it's good, but for patients who have mental illness, this is needed because they can't really communicate. When it is needed, contact with rasa can give a shock. While a person is ill, it's as if there were a rebellion against that person before he became ill. There is something which has been repressed which the shock pressures to reveal itself. Whatever it is that has been repressed is given a shock with rasa, and then it broadcasts whatever was below consciousness. When it is finished, that area can be entered by consciousness. Before that, though, it is closed off by emotions which have not yet been channeled off. They must be channeled off first; and when the overflow decreases, whatever had been repressed can be entered by consciousness. Because there is a problem with concentration. If this problem can be broken down a bit, it can be gone into. This is the way. You can also calm someone with medicine, but this way also works. It's like acupuncture but you use rasa in order to excite it. There are lots of electrical channels which get tight and can't work naturally. When they get shocked, they can again. It's like occult, but it's not. Occult, occultism. Anonymous: It's not?

Wondo: No, it's like it but it's not. Because this is rasa but occultism is different. Occultism is based on thought power. From the power of thought, you can become like a clairvoyant, but it's not this. [silence] Are there any more questions? In practicing daily meditation, the most important thing is not to be under the influence of emotion.

Suriadi: How is my thinking?

Wondo: It's already a bit less. Actually, how is it?

Suriadi: Yes.

Wondo: A bit less?

Suriadi: I'm not conscious of it.

Wondo: Yes, it's difficult but it's less. Before, it was incredible. But I recommend that you not just pay attention to yourself. You are still deficient with your family. That is still lacking. There isn't a connection. It's still divided up.

Suriadi: Usually when I receive guidance, I can't really follow. Like that with feeling rasa. Is the pleasant feeling a result of not differentiating?

Wondo: Yes, it's like that.

Suriadi: I have entered rasa but I don't yet want to differentiate.

Wondo: It's like this, when your meditation is like that, the pamong must show it to you. Here you enter feeling but the change into

rasa is um...

Suriadi: Remaining motionless but in feeling.

Wondo: Actually, I can do it, but if I have to explain how it happens scientifically and with theory, I'm not so good, all the more so to write it down. Actually though, this should be written down so that it can be understood and studied. Then the theory can be practiced, tried--tried, and the experience generates theory, the theory is practiced and becomes experience. And actually you progress again.

Martono (middle-aged member): As for me, is it that I have strong beliefs or am I just very stubborn?

Wondo: You are basically trusting, trusting by nature--You believe and you trust, but you are afraid to try things on your own. So it's like this, you already believe, so if you can, you should sort of make experiments. You should try things. If there are mistakes, that's all right. This way you will be able to have experiences.

Martono: When I do that, I get scared.

Wondo: What you lack there is just the capacity to be aware of your fear and go ahead anyway.

Martono: Unswerving.

Wondo: Your state is already good, but your deficiency is that it will take you a long time to progress. Flirt with danger a little bit everytime, just don't do it too much. This way you will have experiences and you will learn from the mistakes you make. So I advise you to be a bit bolder. Later, when you make errors, all right, you'll change it. So when you receive something, ask, "What the heck is this?" and then try to pursue it. That's what's lacking. You're not pursuing things. When something hits you, you should inquire about it. Try it, try it, so that you get some experience. For example, when you hear my explanations, that's what is said, that's what is said, but how do you put it into practice? What do you have to do? So just try this and then you will get some experience. Don't just follow along. Don't just be obedient to the guides, and then you can get some experience too.

Martono: It's real hard for me to do that. Why can't I just accept it and let it happen, you know? That's what's hard.

Wondo: So your reception of reality is all right. It's already all right. But for the proof, proving to yourself whether it's true or not. You're very trusting. But being that trusting is no good because then all you get is what other people tell you. There is more, you know. Being that trusting is no good. You can't believe so strongly. If you haven't experienced it, don't be willing to believe it first. It's no good if you do. So you say to yourself, "Okay, but I'll try it first. There is proof, but those are just words. So what is my proof? My proof is getting an experience like that but I haven't as yet." So that way you grumble but you don't block out the experience, do you? There's a difference. This way is all right, but if you say, "Later, when I die it will be revealed..." That's different. It's all right to believe but then you should try, try to find proof.

Martono: So that's the way it is.

Wondo: That's the way it is.

Martono: But in making progress, you mean it doesn't make any difference if you make mistakes? Actually what you said before was clear, but I haven't done much that way. Do I pay attention to it or not? It seems impossible if it was really clear, but...

Wondo: For example, just now when I said "Allah" like that, in fact there was a vibration. Actually, there was a vibration because of that. I have taped myself doing that. I meditate and then, Allah, Allaah, like that. I tape it, stop it, replay it and I receive the vibration too. It's kind of funny. So, during the vibration itself, apparently I was like that, and apparently in receiving it, I had changed. So the other day, I hadn't looked at the tapes for a long time. I had finished working with the tapes. When I listened to it again--"What's this? You mean I was still like that? What's this?" It was crude. That's what's called progress. So I myself could see that formerly I was like that because meanwhile my spirit had matured and my attitudes were different. When I played the tape again it was different. For that time it was right, but now it's not, the vibration is crude. So when I played back the tapes from three years before, the vibration seemed different because my mental attitude was different. I can't really blame myself because back then I was like that. This shows the stages of attainment. Back then I still had emotion. I still had--what do you call it?--I was still affected by my will. It was true, yes, but true then and true now are different. So I don't feel I had to be true, to be altogether right, no. Back then, when I explained something, I used emotion. Now I don't. So in this case, though there is a separation in time, it could be repeated. [silence]

Wondo: Now this is called a desire. Do you know what I mean or not? You have a desire. Because you want it now! This is like that. It's like that.

Dewi: But you said before...

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: That this was the rasa of my children, right?

Wondo: Yes, yes. But just now, how about just now? What was it you wanted? Let's go, what did you want?

Dewi: I would like them healthy.

Wondo: What do you mean? There was a desire then, but it wasn't that.

Dewi: There wasn't any desire.

Wondo: That's not true. That's right isn't it?

Dewi: Yes.

Wondo: In fact, it is true. Generally it is to ask health of Tuhan. Actually this is right, but just hold on a second.

Dewi: But before, when I meditated before, was I actually, how do you say it?

Wondo: Bearing.

Dewi: Was my feeling of bearing them right or not?

Wondo: It was right.

Dewi: Oh, yes.

Wondo: It was right.

Dewi: How does one lighten the load?

Wondo: Oh, that's just your own desire.

Dewi: Oh, you mean to lighten it.

Wondo: Yes, of course. You want to, but you can't you know, if it's your desire, you can't. That's cheating, you know. If you try to make the process go fast, you cause a split [thought and rasa?]. You should see for yourself that this is cheating. "I'll go fast so that they'll get well fast." That's what is called cheating.

Dewi: But if I pull like that, the one who's sick will be me.

Wondo: That's okay.

Dewi: So that's the way it is.

Wondo: You can say it's not cheating that way, but it will just keep hurting.

Dewi: Actually, I'd like to ask about the feeling of heat.

Wondo: Yes, yes, it's like that. You'll think, "I'm going to die, it hurts so. Better if I don't. It's a risk, you know."

Dewi: But if I breathe out hard, does it help?

Wondo: It does a little. But then it comes back, depending on... When they are healthy again, then you can do what you like. But don't get all pumped up with the breathing hoping they'll get well quicker, it doesn't work that way. When I was still sensitive, it got to the point where if someone asked me to help them, I would go staggering around.

Dewi: And throw up.

Wondo: And stagger around until I myself had gotten sick. I was afraid that eventually I would, you know. But then I got used to it and it doesn't happen any more. It was because I had been pulling. Because I pulled. It wasn't intended, but the character of my rasa was not yet clean. So it was pulling by itself. It was kind of search and encounter. It was hard, like getting the shit off your shoe. But then it got a bit different. My condition was different. I was granted a change. The healing force now just went direct and didn't really involve me. But my duty was the same. I still must be willing, you know. I can't just take it easy. I can't cheat on it.

Dewi: How about me, Pak?

Wondo: What are you asking?...It's the atmosphere, the atmosphere. So you're being sensitive when you pick it up like that. Yes?

Dewi: At about six this morning.

Wondo: Actually, it indicates you yourself.

Dewi: Actually, I was probably a little feverish.

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: Yes, I remember. It's my husband who is clever in that way, so I called him.

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: He took me to the doctor.

Wondo: For a fact, it indicates that if you can't handle something yourself, you acknowledge how smart your husband is.

Anonymous: But the problem?

Dewi: The children were just a bit sick [upset].

Wondo: This is a problem of the changing season. It's a fact. For both children and adults, when the reserves of the body get too low, it's sure to cause problems. It's especially easy to get sick if you expend too much energy and exhaust your body's reserves. But if you are here in the present, not too much energy is expended. On

the contrary, we receive a strong energy. Receiving the present atmosphere is strong. So medicines actually only help. Because here inside us, there is that which puts things in order. Meditation isn't just for the inner spirit. We can meditate both for the physical body and for the inner spirit.

Sumarno: Is there a change in my consciousness from formerly?

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: Now a question about difficulties [obstacles]. Should we act in accord with rationality or with the reality which is being experienced?

Wondo: You may act with rationality first. You can act with rationality because rationality is needed.

Sumarno: And while you are waiting for the smoke to clear, for example, Dewi before, she could be counceled--this is good, this is bad--easily. While we are waiting, while we are seeking a solution, do we have free will or does this solely depend on the will of God?

Wondo: Free will.

Sumarno: Still choice.

Wondo: Choice. But the choice does not just depend on your own desires.

Sumarno: Oh. It's that way. So you don't do it for yourself.

Wondo: That's right.

Sumarno: On account of someone else then.

Wondo: No. You do it for yourself but the choice that comes out of your use of free will isn't your own personal desire; you should not use emotion. It's not right to, um, do it like that. So you ask yourself "What would it be best for me to do? What's the best way to handle this problem?" When you do it like that, you are using your thoughts in a healthy way rather than a way which is enclosed in emotion, and the way that you act as a result of it will be different.--Isn't it true that there is one kind of rationality which is encased in your own opinions and another which is open to reality? Someone who thinks they are in accord but actually are not--how do I show them that they are not?

Anonymous: When it's like that, it comes out, actually.

Sumarno: When um...with these others here, this emotion, it's as if it were not invited to speak.

Wondo: You mean yourself?

Sumarno: Yes.

Wondo: In that case, that's just timing. You look at the time, the situation, the conditions at the time.

Sumarno: Because the other day, I myself experienced an incident like that. With your permission, I'll give you a little background.

On Tuesday at about one o'clock--this problem was essentially an official one. There were instructions which basically said [. . .] Like this: the requirement was that the classes in the morning should be classes one, two and five. Because class six is already finished, they can borrow the blackboards from classes three and four.

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: As far as the facilities of my school go, as luck would have it, we don't have our own building. Part is rented from SD Inpres and part is the remains of a storage shed. As luck would

have it, the ones in the storage shed are classes three and four. Actually class four is in two sections.

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: Class three is one section. They have four blackboards; and usually that means two/one/one, as far as the blackboards are concerned.

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: According to the instructions from on high, classes three and four must go to school in the afternoon. That means that the blackboards must be two/one/one. Connected with this, if classes three and four are staggered at Inpres, the distance makes it impossible. The time would be used up. So I arranged it. Class four I had come in in the morning. Because of that, they could have the blackboards split two/two. This benefits the children. And in the afternoon, since class three is only one section, if they want to use all four blackboards, they can. Now as luck would have it, there was an inspector from the Kabupaten and I was reprimanded very harshly. Actually, they had instructions to do it. When I wanted to respond, I wasn't allowed to speak. That's what makes me mad. What could I do? So I said, "I would like to give an explanation." "There is no explanation." "Then I beg your pardon." "It's not enough just to beg my pardon." What the heck is this? It was Pak Rono and Pak Hanto. They have been invited to visit.

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: His mother was dying, it was rather difficult. Her house was in south Baturan number 46.

Wondo: That's all right.

Sumarno: What I wonder now was if that was just constructed for the occasion, or if there was hate behind it. I just wonder that.

Wondo: Don't do that. Leave it alone, forget it.

Sumarno: Then there's the other problem, apparently I couldn't respond. It was as though--um--just let it be and later you will be um...

Wondo: Yes, just let it be, and later there will be, um, what do you think?

Sumarno: Before, you know, I used rationality to arrange things. I was clearly right and in accordance with the basic aim of using the blackboards as best I could. But this depends on the kids from class four going home. Then he comes and I get yelled at like that.

Wondo: Just accept it. It's not important; just let it be. Let it work itself out because it's up to other people. I've been through that too. It's all right--just let it go. It's up to them. It's up to them. When it was me, I just tried to make myself willing to accept whatever they had to give.

Sumarno: Before, I asked if I really need to take that by choice. Do I attack them or what? Especially as a government employee, for instance. But actually, having people above you is natural; and, of course you work for and want the organization, or we want advancement. If in reality there may be something blocking the way, but eventually the one who gets it...

Wondo: That's all right. Later there will be another path which doesn't go through them. Sometimes that's the way it goes. So I recommend that you have a little love.

Sumarno: A little...

Wondo: Love, sympathy.

Sumarno: For whom?

Wondo: The ones who yelled at you.

Sumarno: The ones who yelled at me?!

Wondo: That's the way to do it, you know.

Sumarno: That guy yelled at me and then went off and bragged about it.

Anonymous: It's called sympathy.

Wondo: Have sympathy for someone who isn't aware of what he's doing.

Sumarno: When he was born, sure, yes, he must still have been good.

But, frankly, those times are past.

Wondo: Yes, and his character came to this.

Sumarno: I didn't get like that.

Wondo: I have, ah, experienced that.

Sumarno: If I had ever imagined that this would happen...As luck would have it, in the morning I ordered everyone to come in at noon, and the next day they all came together.

Wondo: Yes.

Sumarno: I had them all gather together and then told them: "This is an order from the government, from my superiors. Class four is to come in in the afternoon." But, as luck would have it, there was a kid who had a compelling excuse, "My house is far away, Pak." But I am a subordinate and the role of a subordinate is that of implementor. Although I was addressed like that by my superiors, of course my response to the kid was, "No excuses. Just be here at twelve noon!" That's the way it is, Pak. That's the reality of it.

Wondo: Yes, you have...

Sumarno: As for me, I am there until late in the afternoon. I have to go home first, the main thing being to eat first.

Wondo: So it's like this. I experienced something like that. You should have sympathy for that person. How about it? How could they be like that? According to all this, they are wrong and don't even recognize their error.

Sumarno: In truth, if you base it on the instructions, classes three and four must come in in the afternoon, but there is more, in fact. It cannot be arranged. But this is for a school which is complete, with its classes set out in neat rows and fully equipped. That the distance is great, as luck would have it--it was not intended to have class three here and class four way over there. According to the instruction, classes three and four can come in at noon or in the afternoon. But if they all come in in the afternoon, it's no use, because the morning is already two/two, and then the afternoon is still two/one/one. If you consider it superficially, then of course it seems more efficient if the morning and...

Santoso: If Sumarno, rather than being a male, had been a woman, she would have been mortified.

Sumarno: I took a lot, you know.

Wondo: Well now, if you're going to be like that, then there will be...

Sumarno: Excuse me, Santoso, truly.

Wondo: It's all right. This is open discussion, you know. Don't

be silent. This is open discussion, you know.

Sumarno: You just try it if you become a principal. But don't drool about the extra pay, which comes to 10,000 rupiahs a month [\$16].

Wondo: It's all right.

Sumarno: The fact is, I have been a principal for twelve years now; and this extra pay only started in 1977.

Wondo: It's all right, just let it be.

Sumarno: I kind of feel this, to be frank.

Wondo: Just let it pass. This is an exercise, a mental exercise. That applies to everyone.

Suwarno: The principal of my school is like you. He said: "Suppose you become a principal. It's not possible to be a principal if you still have compassion. It's up to you."

Wondo: "All right. It's up to you. Please, do as you please. I was like that." I am like that and later the reality will...

Sumarno: Because of that, the situation was like that.

Wondo: So it was my wish.

Sumarno: Yes, I know what you mean. The guy above me has his own superior. The fact is that in problems of school conditions and so on, Pak PS [the one who yelled at him] just helps the Kakancam [next status up in the organization].

Wondo: It's all right. It'll be all right. This is what we sometimes fear.

Sumarno: Truly, if it were me and there were an error with one of my personnel, I would certainly want to know about it; and if I were really wrong, I would correct it.

Wondo: No, don't be like that. According to our studies here, the way we do this isn't like that. Don't do that.

Sumarno: Yes. This was with emotion just now, wasn't it, Pak?

Wondo: Don't do that. I have experienced something like that, and this was not separated [rasa and thought?]. If it were to happen now, I could do it fast. But at that time, it took a long time. I got sick. I was sick for a year.

Sumarno: Pak PS [the inspector] acted as though he had the last word in scheduling and this schedule must be followed and cannot be adapted to the circumstances. The first hour is sports, the second hour is study hall. Considering it's twelve noon, just try doing sports. How about it?! That's practice, Pak Wondo, not theory, practice on the field! It's not healthy. Later if I get caught bending the rules again, I get yelled at another time. So I'm faced with the children. "But it's very hot at twelve noon. We just wondered if there were an error or not, spending a long time out there."

Wondo: Yes, that's wrong.

Sumarno: "If you want to scorn Pak Rono [the inspector], you may, but you are also trampling on your allocations from the treasury."

Santoso: If they had collided with a female principal, on the other hand, the principal at my school wouldn't take a step. [He laughs] When I say something, it's as though I need permission to speak.

Wondo: No, there's no need to get permission to speak here. [To Sumarno:] Please pay attention to that later, Pak.

Sumarno: Anyway, I planned a response. I couldn't just shake his hand though.

Wondo: That's all right.

Sumarno: I wanted to make a response, so I jumped on my motorcycle, yeah, enough. Later, they told me that Pak Hanto came back and was angry.

Wondo: Yes. It should be put off.

Sumarno: Yes. Then I went back to my office, and Pak PS was sitting in my chair.

Wondo: That's not important.

Sumarno: That guy just isn't right.

Wondo: It's not important. From the point of view of our study here, it's a pity; and from the point of view of his psyche, it's truly a shame.

Sumarno: My feeling is that for as long as I have lived, this is the first time I have ever heard such truly stinging accusations.

Wondo: So you have added to your experience.

Anonymous: But there will be a result. This inspector will eventually develop heart trouble. Yelling at people like that has an effect on the heart, the intestines, and gives you ulcers. When that happens, he won't even be able to move.

Wondo: Yes, that would be a pity. That is what would be a pity.

Anonymous: Coronary complications and...

Wondo: That's the pity right there. When they get like that, I wonder if people like that don't feel a vibration of hate.

Anonymous: Yes, there is.

Wondo: Then this later, this vibration--just one incident isn't strong and two or three aren't either. But eventually--the pity is here actually, because of the vibrations.

Sumarno: From a normal perspective, when a principal reprimands a teacher in front of the children, it's not good. But with me, the fact is that all my associates were lined up in front of me and were all standing there, clasping their hands [traditional Javanese posture of respect]. The women were all on the verge of tears. I was going into my office, and he shouts: "Hey you, get in there and work! I'm going back to my office. You report to me there first!"

Wondo: So you went over there.

Sumarno: Yes, that's what happened.

Wondo: Actually the pity is now here, because of the vibrations. But it's just that you didn't--um--that you weren't patient enough to await the process.

Sumarno: Yes, that's it.

Wondo: Yes, that's it right there.

Sumarno: The problem is that my associates were all lined up and um...

Wondo: Yes. That's all right. I have often experienced things like that.

Sumarno: The women were all on the verge of tears. I don't mean at all to say that because this was in front of my associates that my prestige has suffered. It absolutely has not. The proof is that they have almost all defended me. All of them stood up for me. On the contrary, generally, they felt sympathy.

Wondo: It's all right. In time you will receive strength from the experience. You just need to try to be patient and wait for it to work itself out.

Sumarno: As it happened, if I may continue. So on Wednesday, this

happened. Starting at that time, when my associates would come in, I would shake their hands because of their friendship. As luck would have it, the woman who has class four gave birth. It wasn't full term yet; and, well, her son died after a day and a night. The fact is that we have family spirit, as if it were our own family. So we were obligated to visit while she was so bereaved. I did that. I wasn't in school myself on Wednesday.

Wondo: Of course not.

Sumarno: My superior arrived at about 2:30. After the visit to the woman who lost the baby, they couldn't bring themselves to return to school again. My friends wouldn't go back there, but went home with the usual complaints of upset stomach and what have you. So it was a free day, Thursday and Wednesday. Friday and Saturday I was there the whole day, but the teachers didn't come.

Wondo: It's all right. This can be used for your study here and in time it will all seem different; just wait and see. I myself experienced something like that to the point where I got sick. It was like this but kept going on and on and was so strong you wouldn't have believed it! It was a disastrous year, but that's the way it goes sometimes.

Dewi: Am I holding a grudge inside?

Wondo: What kind of grudge, first of all.

Dewi: Yes, that's what I mean. So what should...

Wondo: It's like this. Is the vengeance based on reality or is it based on your own version of it? That's different. If I plan revenge, then I am the one who is wrong and it comes back to me. But if I respond with vengeance because I don't have enough self-control, it just comes out spontaneously like what you said before.

Dewi: It's like this. I was abused and reprimanded. I was quiet, but I was hurt inside. Do I have a grudge?

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: Oh, a grudge.

Wondo: But once again now, what happened is history now, but it carries over into the present; that's reality. While it was happening to you, in fact, you're not really wrong in thinking "I've treated him well and now, although I'm not at fault, I'm hated and insulted like this and I'm not even in the wrong." That's all right. That's true, and when it comes out spontaneously like that it's all right. But this event is the return of karma and it has a good side for your psyche too. It's like this, you think to yourself, "Something like this happens to me, when, in fact, I've never insulted him so why is he insulting me?" In fact, this is just the result of your having insulted someone else before.

Dewi: Yes. This happened just after I asked you about having exposed one of Bu Yanti's secrets in public last Friday. But my intention wasn't bad, but she was kind of embarrassed, ashamed. So I told Pak Yono, "Gosh, Pak, I really regret it. In fact, I've just made Bu Yanti ashamed, but it must have been because of karma. Someday I will be shamed by someone." Then, as it happens, within a month, this take place, so when...

Wondo: Yes, actually you should be grateful.

Dewi: So I didn't forget it. So I was quiet, in fact, and realized

that this was my karma.

Wondo: That's all right. It's like this; you have to be able to sort things out, sort things out. "I was like that, now this happens. Isn't this just my karma from before?"

Dewi: Yes, but I had to show my innocence.

Wondo: That's all right, but don't get emotional about it.

Dewi: But actually, I'd like to ask about this request [referring to the report put on the bulletin board].

Wondo: You can do that. In that case, emotion is all right.

Dewi: Oh, yes.

Wondo: In that, it's all right to use emotion. When you're writing, whether it's with emotion or without, it's all right [the same].

Dewi: But then I stuck it up outside, though I had been told not to by the principal.

Wondo: That's what was crude. The crude thing was that it was as though you were telling everyone to look at it.

Dewi: Yes, kind of.

Wondo: Know it! Now what did you use to do it, that's the main thing.

Dewi: I put it out there because I wanted the students to know.

Wondo: That's all right, show them. That's what it was, right there, actually. So this has various effects. A single action can have more than one meaning. But if he gets hurt by this you should have sympathy for him because you have already been hurt yourself. The problem is that when your actions are based only on emotion there is usually an ulterior motive.

Dewi: Yes. In that case the ulterior motive was a trial of strength.

Wondo: Yes, push it aside.

Sumarno: From the state point of view, if the kids come in at one or after, they can see to it right off that the school will not be empty. I'd guess that the state is going to investigate it. Actually, it only occasionally comes from the inspector's superiors, but nonetheless.

Dewi: Here, Pak. Yesterday from eight until ten. [To Sumarno:] May I ask or not?

Wondo: Don't use it as a model, don't use it as a model for your behavior. But for yesterday, it was all right. But don't always do it like that.

Dewi: So we had that discussion, then I showed the report.

Wondo: Yes, that's all right. But don't use it as a model for your behavior.

Dewi: Oh, yes.

Wondo: Don't keep using, don't rely on this method. It depends on the conditions and the situation at the time.

Dewi: He accused me of asking another teacher's help after I argued with Pak Rono, although I didn't. There was somebody gossiping about me. I told him to tell me who it was and I would slap his face.

Wondo: That's all right, but don't use it as a reference. If you were to use it as a guide to behavior, you would make people mad. Don't use it as a reference.

Dewi: I'm still using emotion.

Wondo: Yes, that's all right, but don't use it as a reference.

Anonymous: What kind of relationship is that, meeting every day

but never chatting.

Dewi: Yes. I don't understand this. I was in front of the class and I saw a student hit by that teacher, the male teacher hit a student. I reported it.

Wondo: Yes.

Dewi: It was really a bit outrageous.

Wondo: That's all right. Let it be.

Anonymous: Luckily, Bu Muliadi...

Anonymous: But she had pity, and he was relaxed because he knew he would be hard to catch if the person had pity on him.

Wondo: Yes, have sympathy. I'm like that too. I can be very strict; but later, when I sort things out to myself, I feel sympathy for them. On the level of my responsibilities, though, I must be firm. It's as though they are two different things and you can't mix them, you can't.

Anonymous: But if you have a feeling of sympathy, you cannot bear a grudge.

Dewi: Yes, but actually I had already had that feeling.

Wondo: Yes.

Anonymous: Control it.

Wondo: If you just say yes, they will relax.

Dewi: It's just an act, you know.

Wondo: When you're too tense, it will relax itself.

Anonymous: But, in fact, Harjo isn't all that healthy.

Dewi: He's not all that well psychologically.

Anonymous: He just does whatever he likes.

Dewi: Yes, it's as though he's not in his right mind.

Sumarno: I'd like to ask clarification of what we talked about before. After that incident, my attitude towards myself didn't waver [he meditated].

Wondo: Self-correction.

Sumarno: It should be like that.

Wondo: In seeking a way to correct the problem, you should frame it as, "What would it be best for me to do?" Then eventually there will be an indication of what should be done. Even though you don't initially receive an answer, your question should be, "What would it be best to do?" Sometimes help does not come from yourself but from outside. For example, it could happen that someone else could help by shaking up the situation.

Sumarno: Yes. Basically, words like that sometimes come out when you're angry, sometimes it's like that.

Wondo: But the other day...

Sumarno: As for me, if it is really necessary, I am willing to take it.

Wondo: Yes, just so it's you who says it.

Sumarno: The meaning is still deep inside [batin].

Anonymous: [aside to new arrival:] Sumarno was bawled out.

Anonymous: Suddenly.

Anonymous: How did it happen?

Anonymous: How did you feel?

Sumarno: While I was being yelled at, I was solid; even afterwards I was solid. To be frank, though I'm usually a person who, um, get's

afraid in that kind of situation, but I was solid.

Wondo: Because there were the facts.

Sumarno: Yes.

Wondo: It's all right, it's just, you know...

Sumarno: The basic need that I was using as a guide was the blackboards. From the point of view of the instructions, clearly, I was wrong.

Wondo: But those instructions were general, there are always exceptions.

Sumarno: And he said that I had scorned the instructions.

Wondo: That's all right.

Sukarno: Actually, though, these instructions are usually distributed complete. They are stenciled off so that they can be completed all at once.

Wondo: You must have your own judgment, and he must have insight.

Sukarno: The instructions say that the main thing is that you come in in the afternoon. Although the building and the equipment may not be complete, the main thing is to come in in the afternoon. This cannot be protested. Now the complaint is that if we come in in the afternoon at around noon, it's already cloudy, it's already dark, so we need to use pump lanterns. And, yes, the school is in the country; but their houses are in Solo. And when it rains, it's hard to get home carrying a bike on your shoulder.

Wondo: Yes.

Sukarno: The result is obvious, the schools are mostly empty.

Sumarno: On the way to work this morning, I reported to Pak Kardo, the Kakancam actually.

Wondo: Just let it be. Later there will be an examination. Later they will make a study of it.

Sumarno: So the main thing is self-correction.

Wondo: Self-correction. Later there will be a study, won't there?

So for a fact, reality, reality...sometimes we're not yet sure we agree to let it work itself out; but later, it sharpens us. As for being staggered by this, that's all right, that's all right.

Sumarno: Because I got hit.

Wondo: Yes, it's all right. I'm not saying that you have to be strong--oh no. If you are staggered by this, that's all right, it's okay. This has been a disturbance to your feelings. It's all right. But we must have a firm grip on rationality. A cool head is what's needed here. A cool head and reality will cause the process to take care of itself.

Sumarno: Perhaps later it will get to the point where, with this official problem, they'll accept real data.

Wondo: Yes, that's true.

Sumarno: Not on just this one either.

Wondo: No.

Sukarno: There was some talk about making course outlines. What this teacher said was, "I don't need to make an outline. I just don't need it. If you compare my work with anyone else's, I'm sure I'd come out on top." Wow, that was a crazy teacher. He could pile on the abuse, what fine language would come out of his mouth. That teacher was terminated a year ago. He was soundly reprimanded, but it didn't excite much sympathy.

Wondo: It's like that with bullies. They're willing to bully, but nothing more. As long as they don't...

Sukarno: Brave enough to beat up on subordinates but then ashamed of it.

Wondo: Eventually someone will give it to him. Eventually someone will give it to him. Someone will be brave enough and even talk to his superiors. It will be his bad luck when he gets stomped on; he won't like it. He gets away with it once, twice, three times; but eventually there will be somebody he can't bully, and that will be his bad luck.

Sukarno: Your friend the inspector is experienced. The chosen one before was a guy who was about to retire, but he wanted to keep working until he was forced to and his letter of authority was taken away from him. He was to retire in six months. He just had to give a report...

Sumarno: Because of that.

Sukarno: He was almost too late. But, anyway, this was a famous incident. The inspector made him sick. He came out of it with his heart trouble, fever, stomach disorder and high blood pressure; all four aggravated. To this day, he can't even move.

Anonymous: Who was that?

Sukarno: Pak Wiryo.

Anonymous: Pak Wiryo.

Anonymous: Who?

Anonymous: Wiryo.

Anonymous: What was his name?

Anonymous: The examiner from Sukaharjo.

Anonymous: Which one?

Anonymous: His house is in Kerten.

Anonymous: Kerten, Solo?

Anonymous: Yes.

Anonymous: School inspector?

Anonymous: Yes. Where was he principal before?

Sumarno: In the eastern sector, Mojalaban. We were schoolmates before. Same school in Mojalaban. Pak Wiryo and Pak Hadi.

Suriadi: Between twelve and one just now, how was my practice?

Wondo: Split.

Suriadi: That refers to me [...] because I was surprised. This word, what's this word? So it had already gone too far. Why was the word for me? It seemed like it was for me.

Wondo: Yes.

Suriadi: It's as though there is me and acquisitiveness, it's about me and the desire to have things.

Wondo: Yes.

Suriadi: Me and acquisitiveness. At the same time, also about greed.
[silence]

Wondo: Please, let's meditate again. If there aren't any further... Please, let's meditate again, let's meditate again. It seems there is a difference [in atmosphere] now.

[silence of six minutes]

Wondo: That's completed. So please, now, let us give from our hearts, let us together give thanks to Tuhan that we who have gathered here

might continually be really aware of Tuhan so that it will affect the peace of our inner and outer being, also that of our family and our society in general. We hope that He will also assist whatever of our good intentions are fulfilling, which aim toward total surrender to Him. Surrender to Tuhan and Tuhan will always give protection, light, and guidance to us all. We ask of Tuhan and hope that the Government of Indonesia which wishes to develop our country is granted peace and health, with no difficulties and will be able to quickly bring justice, prosperity, equality, peace and happiness to the islands of Indonesia. We ask of Tuhan and hope that the leaders who rule our government from high to low be given real awareness of Tuhan so that each of them can carry out his duties in accord with the ideal of the Indonesian people. Make it a reality that there be order, peace, prosperity without discord, fertility and abundance. We ask of Tuhan and hope that all the creatures of the earth be given awareness, real awareness of Tuhan, who affects the peace and order of the universe and that all that are in it be in harmony with the will of Tuhan. Allaah, Allaah, Allaah. Be at peace, be at peace. All right thank you, thank you, slowly, slowly. [silence] How was your experience just now? During the quiet meditation, how was it? How was the quiet meditation just now? How was your experience?

Suhartono: Tomorrow night, Saturday night, that is, if you are free, if you are free...

Wondo: Yes?

Indah: We ask that you come, and look forward to your company.

Wondo: Yes.

Indah: Saturday night, that's the...

Suhartono: Tomorrow night, everyone.

Wondo: What time?

Suhartono: At seven or at...

Indah: At seven, please, everyone.

Suhartono: If you are free.

Wondo: Yes.

Suhartono: Do they speak Javanese?

Wondo: Yes, they do.

Anonymous: What's happening, Pak?

Wondo: There's a meeting here.

Anonymous: Yes, tomorrow, but what time?

Wondo: Evening.

Suhartono: At seven.

Suranto, Wow, there was a place in my chest that was like...

Wondo: There was a vibration before. Actually, there was a vibration.

Suranto: I almost started drifting.

Wondo: Yes, yes, there were various, um...

Suranto: According to our own attainment.

Wondo: Yes, yes.

Suranto: It's just that the radiance, while it grew slowly, suddenly it ran here to there, but the movement was only this.

Wondo: Yes, actually, while it...so it was as if it ran out, so it was different, the--um--changed.

Suranto: The radiance was different.

Wondo: Yes. I intend to come tomorrow; but, um, tomorrow night

is the Thomas Cup, isn't it? Will it still be going on?

Anonymous: Yes, the Thomas Cup will still be going on.

Suhartono: Watch it here.

Wondo: Oh, indeed.

Anonymous: The second finals.

Wondo: The Thomas Cup tomorrow at the same time, so I'll try to come at seven tomorrow night.

Suhartono: Please bring your wife too.

Wondo: Yes, if I can. Please excuse me, bye-bye, so long for now.

Suhartono: Pak Marno, so I hear you had a pretty hard time of it.

Sumarno: Yes, I sure did.

AFTERWORD

I am not ready to attempt a detailed critique of any of the many aspects of Western thought on which this perspective makes implicit comment. My own position on its significance should be clear, but, in case it is not, let me say that it makes sense to me both as theory and as practice. I am not much given to speculating on its reception here in the West. I am inclined to wait and see. We have been given a tool for confronting our experience and putting our house in order. It strikes me that if we are to survive as a species, it is high time we do so.

NOTES

Chapter 3: A Western Perspective

1. Statistik Kotamadya Surakarta Tahun 1978 oleh Kantor Sensus dan Statistik, Kodya Dati II, Surakarta.

Chapter 7: Cases

1. The Javanese attitude towards corruption requires a bit of background. In Java it is common to find corruption in governmental and bureaucratic positions. There is an historical tradition which goes back to the Dutch colonial period when native officials felt obliged by the demands of their offices and the inadequacy of their salaries to exact contributions from their constituents. These contributions could range from the inoffensive and voluntary sort to cases of extreme and exploitative corruption, as is described by Sutherland as follows:

"Sometimes the financial abuses of the *Bupati* [regents] were merely annoying; occasionally they could reduce the entire *Pangreh Praja* [civil service] of a Regency to poverty and despair. In one case, for example, in Purwokerto at the turn of the century, the Regent embezzled the mosque funds, was deeply in debt to Arab and Chinese moneylenders, extorted 'gifts' and 'loans' from lower *priyayi* [aristocrats], forced them to exchange their good horses for his broken-down ones and to buy (at very inflated prices) his old ornaments, horses, or furniture; he would sometimes ask for the objects back. His *Raden Ayu* [first wife] ran a card circle, which *priyayi* wives had to attend (their husbands meanwhile visiting the *Bupati*). In the course of the games a set percentage was kept aside for the hostess, who also sold clothes to the *priyayi* and their wives." (1979: 22-23)

This sort of extortion extended from the top to the bottom of the government bureaucracy, and was also practiced by the Dutch though on a somewhat grander scale. Since independence this tradition has been supported by a phenomenal increase in the size of the government bureaucracy and the often rapid inflation which sometimes makes the fixed government wages inadequate. As a result, a certain amount of corruption is considered the regrettable norm. At the same time corruption is viewed as being improper, and there are frequent governmental campaigns to eliminate it without much affect. Corruption is also connected with the often obstreperous attitudes and behavior of bureaucrats. Sumarah frowns on corruption but at the same time views the issue as a usually petty one which should not be blown out of proportion.

GLOSSARY

- aku: Javanese for "I," also used for "ego" or "self"
- alat: tool, used to refer to ego, the body, thought, emotion, etc.,
as "tools" for receiving reality
- Allah: see Tuhan Yang Maha Esa
- angen-angen: contemplation, thought which is close to rasa murni
- anugerah: grace, energy coming from nature
- batin (ngoko), batos (krama): the inner aspect of life, its content
as opposed to form (lahir)
- becak: three-wheeled cycle used to carry passengers
- bu: mother, term of respect used for women
- cocokan: checking, a technique used in guiding
- danyang: any of many sorts of spirits which inhabit the spirit realm
- desa: country, village, traditional agricultural social unit
- dewaraja: godking, the king as the mystical apex of the social
heirarchy and the mediator between man and God
- dukun: traditional medical practitioners
- éklas: behavior which is wholehearted, freely given, without pamrih
- emosi: emotion
- gelem: willing
- gunung: mountain
- guru: teacher
- guru sejati: true teacher, the personal aspect or representative
of the divine
- Gusti Allah: see Tuhan Yang Maha Esa

- hakiki: revealed speech used in guiding
- halus: refined, opposite of kasar
- hormat: respect
- hukum seimbang: law of balance, extremes of any kind cause a counter-action as part of the process of returning to normal
- kampung: neighborhood, block, city social unit
- kasar: crude, opposite of halus
- kasunyatan: reality
- kebatinan: mysticism, the study of the inner (batin)
- kejawen: Javanese worldview, from Jawa (Java)
- keraton: palace, court
- keris: short-bladed sword or dagger made by a specialist (empu) and felt to be endowed with spiritual power
- krama: high Javanese language level, used to express respect
- krama inggil: high krama language level, used to express even greater respect than krama
- lahir: the outer aspect of life, form as opposed to content (batin)
- leladi: service, especially service to Tuhan
- luyut: a doze or light sleep sometimes experienced during meditation which is connected with the process of increasing consciousness
- moh: unwilling
- momong: guiding (verb form of pamong), leading a Sumarah meeting
- nggendong: bearing, a form of cocokan which is used therapeutically
- ngoko: low Javanese, used in informal situations
- ngraga sukma: astral travel
- Nyai Loro Kidul: the Queen of the South Seas, one of the important figures in the spirit realm
- pak: father, term of respect used for men
- pamong: guide (noun form of momong), leader in a Sumarah meeting

pamrih: ego-motives, self-interest

peka: sensitivity

pendopo: open verandah-type place to receive guests in traditional Javanese houses

perjalanan: journey of death, the journey to rejoin with the source of being after death

pikiran: thought

pilah: selectivity

priyayi: noble, aristocrat

purba wasesa: natural law

pusaka: heirloom with spiritual power, e.g., keris

rasa: (1) feeling, (2) taste, (3) the total experiential context of life

rasa murni: the direct response to, and reception of, reality

sesanggeman: the nine principles which are the "Aims of Sumarah"

sujud harian: daily meditation, a sustained awareness to be maintained in daily life

sumud pamiji: special meditation, a special period devoted to meditation

sumarah (pasrah): surrender to Tuhan

susuhuman: king, title of Pakubuwono of Solo

tapa: any of a number of fasts and abstinences

tenang: neutral, an openly receptive state characterized by calm

tepa slira: a "golden rule," stated as "Try it on yourself first," emphasizes knowing the outcome of behavior before doing it to others

Tuhan Yang Maha Esa (Gusti Allah, Allah, Tuhan): God Who Is All in One, the divine principle which includes all that is, whether inside (batin) or outside (lahir)

tumibal lahir: reincarnation

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